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DETECTIVE STORIES

MYSTERY MAGAZINE

APR. 1, 1923 NO. 129

FEATURE STORY

THE DETECTIVE AND THE LAW

by

Frederick F. Shuey

MYSTERY MAGAZINE

Vol. V APRIL 1, 1923 No. 129

ISSUED TWICE A MONTH

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Published by Harry E. Wolff, Publisher, Inc., 166 West 23d St., New York.

Harry E. Wolff, President; L. F. Wilzin, Treasurer; Charles E. Nylander, Secretary.

LU. SENARENS, Editor.

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Subscription Price: Domestic, Single Copy, 10 Cents; Domestic, Yearly, $2.50; Canada, $2.75; Foreign, $3.00.

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The Warning of the Desert

by William Lawrence

THIS is the story of Bill Andrews—plain Bill Andrews. He was twenty-seven years old—married—the father of as fine a baby boy as you have ever seen.

But Bill was just like thousands of other men. He had been forced to leave school and go to work when he was still young.

He had taken the first thing that came along and he had worked as hard as he knew how. But somehow or other, he didn't seem to be getting anywhere.

It was hard—terribly hard, sometimes—to make both ends meet. Sickness came—doctor's bills—the rent was raised—and all that sort of thing.

Above everything else in the world, Bill wanted to go home some night and tell his wife of a raise in salary—of a promotion that would mean a happier, better home.

I wonder if there is a man anywhere who hasn't had that same ambition, that same hope!

But that increase in salary and that promotion never came. Indeed, once or twice Bill came mighty near losing his job.

And then, one night, Bill came across an advertisement that told how men just like himself had gotten out of the rut and had gone ahead—how men with no more education than himself had studied at home in their spare time—how the International Correspondence Schools would come to him and help him to develop his natural ability.

Bill had seen that advertisement and that familiar coupon many, many times before. For two years he had been promising himself that he would cut it out and send it to Scranton. He knew that he ought to do it—that he should at least find out what the I. C. S. could do for him. But he never had.

And he might not have sent in the coupon this time, either, but for the few words under a picture called "The Warning of the Desert":

"On the Plains of Hesitation bleach the bones of countless millions who, at the Dawn of Victory, sat down to wait—and waiting, died."

Bill read that over two or three times. "The Plains of Hesitation!" "The Dawn of Victory!" These two phrases kept ringing in his ears. They worked their way into his very soul. So he clipped that coupon, marked it and mailed it to Scranton.

Bill told me the other day that he was surprised how interested he became in his lessons—of the personal interest the teachers at the I. C. S. took in him—how his employers learned about his studying and saw evidence of it in his work.

"The most important moment in my life," says Bill, "was that moment four years ago when I sent in that I. C. S. coupon. And the happiest moment of my life was when I went home with the news of my first real increase in salary and my first real promotion. If I hadn't sent in that coupon I'd still be working at a humdrum job and a small salary."

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The Detective and the Law

by Frederick E. Shuey

CHAPER ONE

ON a bed in the corner of a squalid little room a man was lying, fully dressed. In a still smaller room adjoining a girl, scarcely more than a child, was busy at the stove.

The man moved, and the girl hurried to his side.

"What is it, daddy? Is the wound bothering you?"

By a desperate effort the man raised himself to a sitting position, then, with the assistance of the girl, to his feet. He was of powerful build, with a hard face that indicated an indomitable brute courage.

"'Tain't that damn bullet—I kin stand that—but I'm worried about Dave."

"Dave can take care of himself, daddy." There was infinite pride and confidence in the words. "Dave has got the swag, and is hiding till he thinks it safe to show up. The papers said the yeggs got away with one hundred and fifty thousand dollars! Think of it, dad! One hundred and fifty thousand!"

She was a beautiful girl. Her slangy words were in sharp contrast to the musical voice with which they were spoken. Her blue eyes were large with wonder at the enormity of the amount she mentioned.

"No more rags for you, Margie," answered the man. A grim smile appeared for a moment on his face. "And the best part about it, gal, is that the bulls hain't got no idee that Buck Wymer and Dave Darrington pulled the stunt."

The words had hardly been spoken when a heavy step sounded in the hall outside, then came a loud rap on the door.

The man sank on the bed. The butt of a revolver extended from beneath a pillow, but with one hand he pushed it out of sight, resting his hand carelessly near by. With the other hand he motioned the girl to open the door.

As she obeyed a heavy-set man stepped inside. His face was inscrutable, but a pair of deep-set eyes seemed to take in the room at a glance.

He flung back the lapel of his coat, showing a detective's badge pinned on his vest.

"Hello, Buck," he said coolly.

"What the deuce do you want here, Mr. Detective?" was the surly rejoinder.

"Tut, tut, Buck. That's no way to greet an old friend. I just dropped in to chat for a few minutes with a party named Buck

Wymer, who formerly went by another name, and who was once known as No. 673 at Joliet."

"Cut that, Morrisey!" There was an ugly scowl on Wymer's face, a malevolent glitter in his eyes. "I told you to stay away from me. You ain't got a damn thing on me. All you've got to do is leave me alone." The fingers by the pillow twitched nervously.

"Just wanted to visit a little, Buck. How are you, Marjorie?"

"You go straight to the devil, Morrisey. The sight of your ugly face gives me the headache," retorted the girl with spirit.

The man addressed chuckled mirthlessly.

"I've as much claim to good looks as your dad. I don't know where you got yours. Where's Darrington?"

"Hain't seen Dave for a month," broke in Wymer. "He's in Chicago."

"Don't lie to an old friend, Buck," returned the detective. "You were seen in company with Dave in this town on the night of the 9th, night before last."

"You must have had a shot of something besides grape-juice, Morrisey," interrupted Marjorie sneeringly.

"And that was the night the First National was robbed," continued Morrisey unheedingly. "Yes, you and Dave were seen together that night. And you say you haven't seen him for a month?"

He tapped his foot on the floor reflectively.

Marjorie broke into a loud laugh.

"Morrisey, as a detective you're a frost. If dad can figure out what you're driving at, he beats me. But just to show what a chump you are, I'm going to prove that Dave was in Chicago night before last."

She walked to a rickety old dresser and took out a packet of envelopes.

"Here's a bunch of letters that Dave's wrote me, Morrisey. Two or three of them were written from Chicago in the past month. This one," detaching the one on top, "come yesterday." She glanced closely at the post-mark, as though for the first time, then sank to the bed by the side of Wymer, convulsed with laughter. "Morrisey you've got an awful line of bunk," she gasped. "This letter's postmarked in Chicago at seven o'clock night before last. If Dave was here he sure come back by airplane."

Morrisey took the letter from her hand and looked it over slowly; then, handing it back to the girl, he arose to his feet and said:

"Marjorie, if you don't get hung in the next few years you will be as smooth a crook as Dave Darrington." He walked to the door and turned. His voice was terse. "But you can tell him for me that I'm out to get him and, by God, I'm going to get you two birds with him."

Wymer's hand had stolen under the pillow, but Marjorie stepped between him and the man in the door and shouted:

"Go on! Get out of our rooms, Morrisey! You've got no business here." She slammed the door after his retreating form, and turned to Wymer, who had arisen from the bed, gun in hand.

"Don't, daddy. Please don't." She took the gun from his hand and placed it under the pillow. "He don't know a thing; was only bluffing." She forced the man back on the bed. "Let me take off your clothes, daddy. You are all in."

"Morrisey might come back, gal. I've got to be ready."

"He won't return to-night. Those letters have got his goat. It's sure a good thing Dave fixed it with his friend in Chicago to mail them here for an alibi."

"Dave's a wonder, gal. Stick to him if anything ever happens to me."

The girl's face flushed.

"I—I don't know, daddy. Dave likes me, I guess, but—he's educated. I—I can't travel in his class."

Suddenly three low raps sounded on the door in quick succession, a pause, then three raps very slowly.

"Dave!" breathed the man. He started to arise, but the girl pushed him gently back on the bed.

"Keep quiet, daddy."

She ran to the door and opened it.

"Dave!" she whispered.

The man entering the room took her in his arms. Her face was upturned to his

and her arms stole about his neck. He bent his face to hers, but before their lips met he paused. A bitter light replaced the soft expression of his eyes.

Gently he released her and slowly removed her arms from about his neck.

"No, Marjorie, little girl. It must not be. Your first kiss must not be from the lips of a crook."

The girl's face went white. Instinctively she recoiled. Her lips moved, but no sound came. Then she backed away until out of view in the other room.

CHAPTER TWO

THE newcomer was young and of athletic build. There was no hint of evil in his clear-cut features, but a reckless curve to the lips and a dare-devil light in the eyes gave evidence of one to whom danger was the spice of life.

His glance followed the girl until she disappeared from view; then he walked quickly to the bed. Wymer had arisen to a sitting position.

"Buck!" exclaimed the younger man, grasping the other by the hand. "What's the matter, old fellow? Did they wing you?"

"They nearly croaked me, Dave. Have you got the swag? Where have you been? How much is it?"

"Have a heart, Buck. One question at a time. Of course I've got a swag. And I've been busy dodging the coppers and hiding it where it's absolutely safe. But tell me what happened to you."

"Nothing except I picked up one of them stray pieces of lead that was flyin' after us when we made our get-away. I was able to make it here, and Margie doctored me up. Morrisey, the bull, was here a while ago. Don't know nothin'. Just nosin' around. Claimed you and me was seen together night before last. Margie sprung your letters on him and he beat it."

Darrington smiled grimly.

"Just the same, Buck, if Morrisey was here, he suspects us, whether he knows anything or not. And when Morrisey once gets an idea in his head he never puts it out until he is absolutely convinced it don't belong there."

Wymer threw back the pillow, disclosing the revolver.

"I'll put it over him one of these days," he said through clenched teeth. "Nineteen years ago he had me sent up for a stretch. I got the judge that sentenced me, blast him. You know how I got him, Dave. You are the only man I ever told. And we got him again the other night when we robbed the bank. I've never been able to get Morrisey, but he'd better stay out of my way; I've warned him." The man's face wore a wolf-like snarl. His eyes gleamed ferociously.

"Come on, Buck, lie down," said the younger man soothingly, "and take it easy. I want to talk to you. In the first place, you want to put all thought of getting any one out of your mind. You hardly realize yet that you have stepped out of the ranks of an ordinary yeg into the position of a crook of affairs. You are a man of means, Buck! Get next to yourself! Let's talk about what we are going to do with our newly acquired wealth."

"It's mostly yours, Dave. You framed the deal. I couldn't have pulled a stunt like that without you."

"It's mostly Marjorie's, Buck. Don't forget our bargain. We were to give Marjorie two-thirds of whatever we got. Her share happens to amount to just one hundred thousand dollars."

"One hundred thousand dollars," in an awed whisper, "to Margie? Dave, what'll she ever do with it?"

"That's the main thing I want to talk to you about. You and I have got to clear out of here. Marjorie is getting too old for us to be dragging around over the country. She must go to school."

"School? She knows more now than I do."

Darrington smiled.

"No doubt, Buck, but that isn't very much for a girl worth a hundred thousand in her own name. We must send her to college."

"College! Why, she wouldn't live with me when she gets out."

"Yes, Buck, Marjorie would live with you if you would permit it, but you are not going to permit it. The time has come for you and I to bid Marjorie good-by. She is entitled to a decent life. She is a beautiful girl, a good girl, and ought to be with others of her kind. She must sever all connections with us and with this life."

The old man's face was pale.

"But that will be infernal, Dave." His harsh voice was strangely soft. "I think a lot of the gal."

"I know, Buck," returned the young fellow slowly, "I know." His own face was pale. "But because you care for her is the reason you should want her to go right. And after all, Buck, we are not right. You are nearer right than I, because you were born to this life and know nothing else. But I had all the advantages of education, was merely adventurous, and I went into this life with my eyes open, but I did not see for what I was headed until—I met Marjorie. Then my eyes were made to see, but it was too late. I saw, Buck, the girl I loved. I saw her fair young beauty and spotless virtue being contaminated by a moral atmosphere that I was a part of. And I detested that atmosphere and myself when I realized that it was assimilating and would in time claim as its own the immaculate purity of this girl's soul."

He paused for a moment. Wymer lay immovable on the bed. Softly the young fellow continued:

"Love works wonderful changes, Buck. Where there was selfishness it is replaced with self-sacrifice. Where there was hate and relentlessness it is replaced with charity and forgiveness. Where before were only ideas, after love there are ideals. Our motto in life has been 'the survival of the fittest.' We were wrong, Buck. Wrong! Wrong! The true purpose and guiding principle of life is love. Law is necessary because love is absent, but love will govern when law fails.

"There was never any love in your life, Buck, until you had Marjorie. There was never any in mine until I met her. Let us permit that love to govern us, old pal. Because we love her let us send her from us. You have followed my lead into the dark by-ways of crime. Let me lead you just once, Buck, into the broad, open road of love and duty."

Darrington's eyes held a dreamy, far-away look, as though utterly oblivious to everything going on about him. Gradually he became aware of a light touch on his knee. He glanced down. Marjorie was kneeling by his side. Like stars seen through a mist, the girl's eyes shone into his from behind pearly tears which were held, unreleased, before them.

"Dave, Dave," she whispered, "I love you. I thought, when you first came in the room, that you didn't care, and I wanted to die. But now I know.

"Oh, Dave dear, don't send me away from you. I am no better than you or daddy. I don't want to be any better. I just want you."

Tenderly the man caressed the mass of wavy brown hair before him.

"When you are older, dear, you will understand and thank us for what we have decided to-night."

A week later, unobserved in the blinding rainstorm raging that night, two men caught the rear end of a fast passenger train headed out of the city. And in another part of New York, in a sumptuously furnished room, a girl was stretched across the bed sobbing herself to sleep. Clasped tightly in one hand was a letter which read:

"DEAR LITTLE MARJORIE: As you progress in life and meet people of refinement and of higher ideals you will quickly assimilate them. Thoughts will come to worry you about the money you are using and the manner in which it was acquired. Put those thoughts from your mind, for I pledge you that some day the money that has been taken will be refunded.

"It will, perhaps, be no comfort to you in later years to know that somewhere in the world is a man for whom there will be no other girl. For with that thought will come the memory of what that man was.

"But it may comfort you to know that if

ever you need a friend for any purpose whatever, you can reach that friend by writing to the address I have given you.

"Do not worry about Buck and me, for we are going straight.

"Good-by, dear, and may the God I have often doubted bless and protect you."

CHAPTER THREE

JUDGE MARVIN DEWITT, heaviest stockholder of the First National Bank which had been robbed nearly five years before of a hundred and fifty thousand dollars, was just finishing a consultation with Detective Morrisey.

The judge was a man perhaps fifty-five years of age, of dignified appearance, and his otherwise stern face was softened by the kindly expression of his eyes—eyes that continually seemed to be searching; searching for something that was never found.

"And you think, Morrisey, it is only a question of weeks until you will have the parties under arrest who robbed the bank?"

Morrisey drew a black cigar from between his lips.

"I have the girl spotted, judge. There were two men and a girl. The girl was only about seventeen years old, but as smooth as any of the outfit. She handed me a package at the time that threw me clear off the scent, and by the time I got wise to myself the whole gang had disappeared. I have never been able to locate any of them until recently. By the merest accident I ran into the girl. I am not absolutely certain I have the right one, but to-night she is going to be put to the test. Even after I am thoroughly convinced she is the one I won't pinch her—yet. Through her I want to locate the others. I told her once I would get the outfit"—he smiled viciously as he started for the door—"and I will."

"Just a moment, Morrisey." A pathetic look came into DeWitt's eyes. "You say she was only seventeen?" He drew himself erect. "The law must be enforced, but it seems a shame—a shame." He paused a moment, then hesitatingly, as though not knowing the answer and being afraid to hear it: "You have no news of the other person I asked you to find?"

"Not the slightest, judge. I have absolutely no clue."

As the door closed behind him Morrisey muttered:

"Blamed old woman. If he had his way he'd turn every girl crook in the country loose."

Within the room DeWitt's eyes were closed and his lips moved as if he were muttering.

About nine o'clock that evening Richard Van Verten was admitted and comfortably seated in the luxuriant apartment of Miss Marjorie DuMonte. A half-hour later he arose from his comfortable chair, an angry flush on his cheeks, and growled:

"Perhaps you are not aware of the fact that any other girl in the city would do almost anything for an opportunity to say 'Yes' to a proposal of marriage from me?"

The exquisitely beautiful girl seated before him carefully selected a chocolate from the box by her side and held it poised halfway to her lips. A pair of perfect eyes met his with just a hint of mild surprise.

"Really? I had no idea your money could so damagingly impair their vision and their judgment." Her harmonious voice held a touch of irony which caused the man to wince.

"Why do you take that attitude with me, Marjorie—Miss DuMonte? I am young; they say I am handsome, and I'm wealthy. You surely cannot mean what you say. Tell me that you are only joking and say 'Yes.'" He leaned toward her, and attempted to take her hands, but she drew them away, arising to her feet.

"Your egotism is absolutely insufferable. Were there no other reason for my refusal, that alone would be sufficient. But there are plenty of others. If I must be brutally frank—and it is evident I must—I detest you. You are notorious for your affairs with women, and I don't want you. Is that plain enough, Mr. Van Verten?"

The man's face grew repellant with malevolence. A treacherous, reptile-like

glitter darted from his eyes, and his words were grated through clenched teeth:

"Yes, it's plain enough, and it burns your bridge to safety, Miss Marjorie Wymer!"

The girl stood immovable. Slowly the color receded from her face, leaving it perfectly white, but her eyes met his steadily.

The glitter in the man's eyes was succeeded by a triumphant leer. His tense expression relaxed as he went on jeeringly:

"Haven't heard that name for some time, have you? And you probably haven't heard from Buck Wymer or Dave Darrington for some time, either? Well, I'll post you. They are both in jail charged with the robbery which enabled you to get your education and play the part of a lady. And—they—have—squealed — on — you! Now, what have you to say, Marjorie Wymer?"

The early years of the girl's life, when she had been continually on the defensive, stood her in good stead now. The color had returned to her cheeks, so she looked the man coolly in the eyes.

"This is a new and interesting phase of your character, Mr. Van Verten. From your general attitude I had long known your mental progresses were not functioning properly, but I never suspected they would take the form of delusions such as the one with which you now seem obsessed. I am sorry if the truths I spoke brought on an attack of an unusually serious nature."

The man gave a nasty, sarcastic laugh and moved closer to her, his eyes enveloping her with a suggestive, insulting leer.

"The attack is serious, all right—for you. I have kept you from being arrested. Knowing your history, I have offered you what I have never offered any other woman—marriage. I would have married you and protected you, and I will protect you yet—for value received. You had your chance. Now you will obey me or you'll go to jail. Come on, give me a kiss."

He reached toward her, and as the girl moved backward with a quick spring he caught her in his arms. Fighting with the fury of desperation, she forced him toward a table in the centre of the room. They fell against it, and Van Verten slowly forced her backward across the top. His arms were about her waist, his face but a few inches from hers. Fighting the pressure of his face with one hand, with the other Marjorie slowly worked open a drawer of the table.

Cruelly deliberate, Van Verten pressed back the frenzied resistance of her arm; his eyes blazed into hers with a look of mastery.

Suddenly, with deadly suggestiveness, something was pressed against his side. An inch from the girl's lips his face paused. He shivered as though suddenly cold. Strange what a menacing message that something at his side conveyed. The girl did not speak, but the pressure in his side was sickeningly relentless. His arms lost their power to hold. The feverish flush of triumph on his cheeks became a ghastly yellow. Into the eyes but a moment before so triumphant came a look of craven cowardice.

With a scream of abject terror he suddenly sprang backward. His trembling legs failed in their support, and he fell to the floor, where he crouched, his parched lips framing only the words:

"Don't shoot! For God's sake, don't shoot!"

Slowly the girl walked to him, an automatic in her hand.

"You coward!" The finality of contempt and loathing was in her tone. After a moment she continued slowly. "I know two men, Van Verten, who will kill you if I tell them what you have done to-night. Shall I tell them?"

"No, my God, no. You wouldn't want me murdered, would you, Marjorie?"

"You are not the subject of murder, Van Verten. One can only commit murder on a human being. You are worse than a beast." She paused a moment, then suddenly: "Get up from there and sit in a chair. Hurry up!" And when the man had tremblingly complied she continued: "Now, tell me where you got that strange story about some Marjorie Wymer? I want the whole truth."

The automatic was pointed directly at him, and nervously hesitant Van Verten began:

"One night you and I were in a theatre party. As we were leaving the theatre a man who knows me saw us. The next day he called on me and inquired about you. I told him all I knew, and told him I was going to marry you."

A mocking smile curved the girl's lips.

"I—I would have married you, Marjorie."

Her lips hardened.

"Confine yourself to your story. Who was this man?"

"A detective named Morrisey."

A hardly perceptible gleam came into the girl's eyes.

"After you told him you were going to marry me, what then?"

"He told me who you were."

"You mean he told you who he thought I was."

"He—he wasn't sure."

"And you were to make sure to-night. Is that it, Van Verten?"

"He wanted me to see what I could find out."

Marjorie arose to her feet.

"All right, you capper, you stool-pigeon. Now you may go and tell him."

She maintained her composure until Van Verten left the room, but as the closing door shut him from view the revolver dropped from her hand. Mechanically, as though she had done the same thing innumerable times, from the table before her she lifted a small gold frame which contained an open letter and kissed it.

"Dave, Dave," she murmured, "if ever I will need you, I need you now."

With nervous decision she got pen and ink and seated herself at the table; then with feverish energy she wrote:

"DAVE DEAR: I have written you so often, but you never answer. It has been so long—so long. My only consolation has been that you get my letters, for they are not returned. And you know that I have always loved you.

"I still have the note you wrote me the night you left. It is before me now. Its message is part of my very being. I have assimilated refinement and higher ideals, but they have only taught me what a wonderful love has been given me. And because I know you, dear, I know that love is still mine.

"And nowhere, dear, have I found higher ideals or a more noble conception of life than you expressed to daddy that night in our dingy little rooms when I came and knelt at your feet. I have remembered your words, dear, and now I understand them in all their idealism.

"During all these long years you have never even let me hear from you. I know you refrained from answering because you thought it was for my good, but now I want to see you, for I need you, dear. Do not be alarmed, and be very careful when you come, but come at once.

"As ever, your own

"MARJORIE."

CHAPTER FOUR

THE scene now shifts to a handsome residence on Madison avenue.

Morrisey glanced up as Van Verten burst hastily into the reception-room, where the officer sat awaiting the young millionaire.

"What's the matter, Mr. Van Verten, sick?" he inquired.

The young man passed into another room and returned with a decanter of whisky. With trembling hand he poured a glassful and drained it before answering.

"She damn near shot me, Morrisey." His teeth were chattering. "She's—a—regular wildcat."

The officer's face carried a thinly veiled look of contempt. Dangers to Morrisey were as his bread and butter in his daily routine. A hunter of crooks, his one redeeming virtue was his brute-like physical courage. The craven nature of the other man caused him a feeling of disgust, but Van Verten was a man of wealth, and it would not do to antagonize him.

"Tell me about it," the detective said briefly.

After another drink of whisky Van Verten was sufficiently composed, with the as-

sistance of questions from Morrisey, to tell his story. When he had finished the detective nodded.

"She's the girl, beyond a doubt." He paused a moment, eyeing Van Verten reflectively. "Guess I'll have to pinch her."

Van Verten took another drink and walked close to the detective.

"I told you I wanted that girl, Morrisey, and I would have married her to have gotten her. And you are going to help me!"

Morrisey lit a black cigar and smoked constantly.

"I owe my duty to the law, you know, Mr. Van Verten," he answered. "I don't arrange marriages, you know."

"The devil with the law! I've got money enough to buy all the law in the country. Besides, she will be a better object for the law to handle after I have finished with her than she is now if she turns me down."

"It will take a lot of money, Mr. Van Verten," returned the detective coolly.

"Money means nothing to me. I want the girl for my wife, and I want your help. Name your own price."

Slowly Morrisey arose and helped himself to a glass of whisky.

"I'll talk business with you, Mr. Van Verten."

Judge DeWitt had been detained in the court-room until a late hour. As he stepped into the street he was nearly bowled over by a newsboy who ran into him.

"Latest edition!" the lad was shouting. "All about the double murder."

"Here, son." The judge handed the boy some change and took a paper. Stepping into a touring car at the curbing, he was soon at his home. Comfortably seated in his study, he read an account of the murders the boy had shouted so lustily. Across the top of the sheet in headline letters were the words: "Dual Murder Perpetrated." Then came the following:

"Marjorie DuMonte of 4044 Vernon Drive is being held in connection with the murder of Richard Van Verten, wealthy clubman, and a private detective named Morrisey. Van Verten and Morrisey were shot to death in the former's home at Kenwood Heights. The shooting occurred about nine o'clock this evening. A fusillade of shots from Van Verten's room brought a number of servants to the spot. Van Verten and Morrisey were both lying dead on the floor. Van Verten was unarmed, but Morrisey held an automatic in his right hand. Two shots had been fired from the gun. Two bullets had entered Morrisey's body, and one had entered Van Verten's. The supposition that Morrisey may have fired the shot which killed Van Verten was discarded upon discovery that the bullet which killed Van Verten was of different caliber than that of Morrisey's gun.

"The girl, Marjorie DuMonte, was attempting to leave the room through an open window when the servants arrived. They seized her and telephoned the police, who went to the scene immediately and placed the girl under arrest.

"On the ground beneath the window out of which the girl was attempting to escape was found a revolver with three empty chambers. Footprints of a man were headed away from the house. The sill of the window was stained with blood.

"It is evident some wounded man had gone through the window just a moment before, and the girl was in the act of following him when seized. The owner of the gun beneath the window is the one who shot Morrisey and Van Verten, but whether it was the girl or the man who escaped is undecided.

"Miss DuMonte, who is refined and educated, maintains a stoical composure, and will answer no questions which would throw a light on the mystery."

More followed, and when the judge finished reading he slowly arose to his feet, muttering:

"Marjorie DuMonte? I wonder if this could be the girl Morrisey had connected with the bank robbery. But surely not. This girl is refined and educated. The other would not have been." He sighed heavily. "I presume it will be my usual misfortune to be compelled to hear the case."

CHAPTER FIVE

SEVERAL weeks elapsed and the case of the People vs. Marjorie DuMonte was to be tried. She had retained a lawyer from another State to defend her, but had been refused bond, and attorney and client were holding their final consultation in the girl's cell. A guard came down the passage, and the lawyer arose.

"I will be here to accompany you to the court-room in the morning, Miss DuMonte. Everything will be all right. "Have no fear."

For one who had been confined in a cell for weeks, the girl's face was radiantly beautiful and happy.

"I am not afraid," she answered lowly. "I trust you implicitly."

Before nine o'clock the following morning the court-room was crowded. The presiding judge appeared to be tired and haggard.

"Judge DeWitt looks all in," whispered a bailiff to the court reporter.

"He surely does," responded the latter. "He dreads to try a case against a young girl. Poor old fellow. He lives in constant fear that——"

"Take this down, reporter!" It was the judge's voice, and the case of the People vs. Marjorie DuMonte was in progress.

The jury was quickly selected and sworn, the opening statements made, and the first witness for the State was called. There was but little objection from the defense to any of the testimony of the State's witnesses, which was substantially the same as the account of the affair published in the newspaper.

When the State had presented its evidence and rested, Marjorie's attorney spoke to a man sitting by his side.

"Take the stand, please!"

A grim recklessness on the man's face, an ominous, inexplicable something about the swing of his shoulders as he walked to the witness stand, marked him as a man different from his fellows.

His was a strong face, a hard face, seamed with rugged lines, each line a printed chapter of his life. The chapters spoke of strife, of victory and defeat, of hate and relentlessness. But he who had written these chapters was also responsible for their reading and interpretation, and mercifully did not delegate to the reader power to go beneath the result and examine the cause. Those who looked read only in general terms what this man had experienced. In what particular manner his experience was acquired was not given them to read. They only knew that before them was a man who had lived his passions deep. What evil had been written on his face there now dimly appeared faint interlineations, which told that the germ of human kindness had taken root in this man's soul. Somewhere, buried beneath passions which had smothered the better impulses of his nature, this germ was struggling and striving to expand and grow.

The man paused by the stand, took the oath, and seated himself. For a moment his eyes paused on the judge dispassionately, fastened themselves with a cool glance of defiance on the prosecuting attorney, then rested with a look of confidence on the attorney for the defense.

"State your name to the jury," said the latter.

"Buck Wymer."

"Are you related to Marjorie DuMonte, the defendant in this case?"

"No relation. But I have raised her as my own child from the time she was two or three years old."

"You have heard the witnesses for the State testify as to the killing of a man named Van Verten and another named Morrisey?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you remember the night they were killed?"

"I do."

"Do you know anything pertaining to the killing of the two men mentioned?"

"I do."

"Tell the jury what you know."

"I came here to see Margie that night, and——"

"Where did you come from?"

"Chicago."

"Is that your home?"

"Yes."

"Why did you come to see her?"

"Just a moment!" It was the prosecuting attorney's voice. "We object to that line of questioning, your honor. It has nothing to do with the guilt or innocence of the accused."

"They are preliminary questions, your honor," returned the other, "necessary to lead up to this man's knowledge of what occurred."

"The witness may answer," ruled the judge.

"Well," continued Wymer, "Margie had wrote a letter sayin' she was in trouble and needed help. I got on the train and came at once."

"Go ahead and tell what happened after that."

"I went out to Margie's place as soon as I got here. She wasn't there. A servant told me she had left with a man named Van Verten and another named Morrisey. The servant thought they was goin' to Van Verten's place and told me where it was. I went there as fast as I could.

"The front door was open. Nobody was in sight, and I walked in. I heard loud voices from one of the rooms. I stole close and listened. What I heard made me go crazy mad." The witness paused for a moment while he wet his lips with his tongue. "The two men was talkin'. They was laffin' about how they'd got Margie there by tellin' her she'd meet me and another fellow, a friend of mine. They had jest finished searchin' her for a gun. Two men, damn 'em! searchin' a girl!" Wymer's hands were tensely gripping the sides of his chair, as though in memory he again lived the moment.

"I object to those words!" snapped the prosecutor.

The eyes of the witness gleamed viciously.

"That's what I said, and that's what I meant."

He was glaring straight into the eyes of the prosecutor. His words came tense, venomous, flung from between clenched teeth.

And now the judge spoke, his calm, even tone in sharp contrast to the passionate one of the witness.

"I must warn the witness to be more moderate in his language and confine himself to a recital of facts."

Wymer swung his baleful glance from the attorney for the State toward the judge, but midway his glance was caught and held by Marjorie's attorney. The latter's eyes conveyed a warning message. Slowly the witness settled back in his chair, but a rebellious, defiant light smoldered in his eyes, and his strong hands opened and closed as though from the very depths of his soul came a protest against submitting to censure.

"Now, Mr. Wymer," continued his questioner, after giving the witness a few moments to recover his composure, "you stated that you learned from their conversation that these two men had just finished searching this defendant. Go on and tell what followed."

"While I was standin' there," Wymer continued, "I heard one of the men say: 'Get out of here now, Morrisey. I'm through with you. She hasn't got a gun, and I'll do as I damn please with her. She's got to marry me.' "

"I heard Margie scream, and I threw open the door. Morrisey was coming toward me. The other man had Margie in his arms, and she was fightin' to get free.

"Morrisey drawed his gun and I drawed mine. I fired two shots at him and he fired twice at me. One of his bullets hit me in the left shoulder. I saw him drop to the floor. I turned to the other man. I think he'd gone nutty. Scared stiff. White as a sheet. He'd let go o' Margie, and stood there a-beggin' for mercy. I'd 'a' shot him as he stood. But Margie yelled, 'Don't, daddy; please don't.' She was beggin' for the vermin that tried to wreck her happiness. I dropped the point of my gun. Van Verten—that was him—began to sneak toward the gun in Morrisey's hand. A snaky glitter in his eye told me he was looney now for sure, so I shot him dead!"

The tense silence that followed his words was broken by a low sob from Marjorie, seated by her attorney's side.

The latter placed a hand on her shoulder.

"Please be brave for just a little while longer. Everything will be all right."

He turned to the witness.

"Go ahead and tell what happened after that."

"I heard yellin' and some one runnin' toward the room. There was an open window, and I climbed out. I fixed up my shoulder the best I could and caught a train back to Chicago. Then I saw by the papers that Margie had been arrested."

"What became of your gun?"

"I dropped it somewhere."

"Do you know where?"

"No. I know I didn't have it when I got on the train."

"That's all, Mr. Wymer."

As the witness left the stand a man stepped to his side and placed a hand on his arm.

"I place you under arrest charged with the crime of manslaughter."

The attorney for the defense had arisen to his feet.

"We are prepared to put up any bond you may require."

And now the prosecuting attorney arose.

"Your honor, the State knows when it is beaten. Our business is to prosecute—not persecute. We know—and every one present in this court-room knows—that this girl is not guilty of the crime of murder. We could cross-examine this witness and perhaps discover much that we wish to know, but we can do that at this trial. We are arresting him for manslaughter. We do not believe it possible to convict for murder, and we will be glad to arrange for reasonable bond. As for the case now being tried, we wish, with the court's permission, to dismiss it."

The judge spoke, but his words were drowned by a tremendous cheer, like the rush of water when a dam is broken, which arose from the crowded court-room. Like a herd of cattle on a stampede, the throng surged about Marjorie DuMonte and her attorney. But she neither saw nor heard them. Her arms were around her attorney's neck, her eyes uplifted to his.

"Dave, Dave," she murmured, "get daddy and let us go where we can be alone."

And with utter disregard for conventionalities the attorney for the defense folded his client in his arms and pressed his lips to hers.

CHAPTER SIX

ABOUT nine o'clock that night Buck Wymer, at liberty on bond, was admitted to the home of Judge DeWitt and faced the latter in his study. He had telephoned a half-hour before and made the appointment.

"Be seated, Mr. Wymer," said the judge.

Wymer remained standing, eyeing the other in an abstract, impersonal manner. A puzzled frown was on his face—a frown apparently not caused by anything particularly pertaining to DeWitt, but more as though he was trying to neutralize in his own mind certain divergent extremities of thought which were difficult of neutralization.

"Strange!" he remarked finally in an odd voice. "Damn'd strange that I don't hate you."

Judge DeWitt scrutinized the other keenly, as if in doubt as to whether the man speaking was in his rational mind, and Wymer continued in the same odd tone:

"And it'll be stranger still if you don't shoot me before I finish tellin' you what I come to let out. I brought a gun in case you didn't have one." He drew an automatic from his pocket and placed it on a table near the judge.

The latter made no reply, but his scrutiny of the other continued. His brows were contracted in a tense effort to place some coherent interpretation on Wymer's words and actions.

"Twenty-four years is a long stretch," went on Wymer. "I ain't surprised you don't remember me. I wouldn't have knowed you if I hadn't kinda kept tab on you. Maybe my right name will help you remember. Twenty-four years ago I was called Buck Redmond."

DeWitt passed a hand across his forehead.

"Redmond—Buck Redmond," he repeated slowly. "I have a vague memory of the name, but I have no recollection of you. Have we met before?"

"Yes, once before, Judge DeWitt. Once before we met, the same as we met to-day—in a court-room, only that time I was the defendant. You was a young man then; it was your first term as judge. I was brought before you charged with breakin' and enterin', an' I remember your very words. You said: 'Buck Redmond, you have violated the law, and must be punished. The law is the supreme thing in civilization. It must be enforced. I sentence you to three years.' I served 'em all—every month, every day, every minute! It didn't mean much to you. You've forgot, but them three years was hell to me."

There was no rancor in Wymer's words, no indication of feeling, merely a calm recital of history. This man of tumult, born to a life of crime, strong in everything save governing his own passions, related the story of the one thing which for years had flamed his hate and calloused his soul. His tone, like the dead ashes in a grate, spoke of a fire which had once been, but was now extinguished forever.

"But, DeWitt," he continued slowly, "if I suffered, the deepest pit in a thousand hells won't describe what I made you suffer. Do you begin to know what I'm a-drivin' at?"

For a moment the judge's form grew tense, then suddenly relaxed. He took a step toward the other, his arms extended before him.

"My baby—my baby girl!" His lips barely framed the words. His voice was scarcely audible.

Wymer stood straight and still, his face a stony mask which was given the lie by something wet which trickled slowly from his eyes, and followed downward the rough wrinkles in his cheeks. After a moment he spoke, and now for the first time into his voice came a slight tremor, but the tremor was not from fear.

"I stole her, DeWitt, after my three-year stretch. She was about a year old, I figgered. Her mother was dead, and I watched my chance to get her from the nurse. You know when she went." For a minute Wymer stood without speaking. Neither man moved, then the crook continued: "I stole her, DeWitt, but I'm a-givin' her back to you as sweet and perty and pure as the day I took her. 'Twas five years ago we started gettin' her ready to give her back—me and Dave. Dave was my buddy, a buddy that 'ud never fail. He wasn't no common crook. He wasn't no crook at all in his heart. His heart was big enough and good enough to see and feel your mis'ry. 'Twas five years ago, DeWitt, jest after the First National was robbed, that we started a-gettin' her ready. Me and Dave robbed the bank. I'd jest told Dave about Margie. Marjorie was the name on a little ring she had. Dave didn't have the thing thought out then, not like he did afterwards, but he had part of it figgered out. We was goin' to rob something, so Dave says: 'Why not the First National Bank? DeWitt's a heavy stockholder, and we'll be taking mostly Margie's own money.' I didn't give a damn what we robbed, except I'd jest a little bit rather 'a' robbed you than anybody else, so I says all right.

"After we got the money Dave springs sendin' Margie to school, and we sent her. And then, after she was gone, Dave commenced on me about sending her back to you. After a while, perhaps because Dave wanted it, and maybe a little because I was commencin' to know how you must feel, but mostly on Margie's account, I agreed to give her back to you as soon as she'd finished school. We didn't go near her for five years. We wanted her to grow up refined and to forget all about the outfit she'd been raised with. And we was jest a-goin' to let her know who she really was and tell her to go to you, when I got her letter sayin' she was in trouble. The letter was wrote to Dave, but he was out of town, so I come at once. You know the rest, DeWitt. And now I'm a-waitin' for you to shoot."

"My daughter?" whispered DeWitt. "My daughter is——"

"Your daughter is Marjorie DuMonte. That's the name Dave gave her when we left her and sent her to school. Dave's a-tellin' her the story now, and after a while they'll be here. Hurry up and shoot before they come!"

CHAPTER SEVEN

THERE was angry impatience in Wymer's tone. Through his love for Marjorie, the only love which had ever entered his crime-hardened life, he had felt the great wrong he had done the man before him, and he had just completed doing all that could now be done to make that wrong right. While his story was in process of recital he had held himself from any expression of feeling. But the story was finished. Buck Wymer, the man of action, was commencing to reassert himself. In the school of life in which Buck had been trained a personal wrong called for quick and drastic physical retaliation. He had confessed his wrong to DeWitt. In Buck's mind there was but one thing the other could do. But DeWitt stood immovable.

Suddenly Wymer seized the automatic and shoved it into the other's hand. For a moment the latter held it, then with a cry of repugnance let it drop to the floor.

"What in thunder's the matter?" exclaimed Wymer angrily. "Pick it up and shoot!"

DeWitt straightened himself with a convulsive jerk.

"That would be murder," he said mechanically. "I cannot violate the law."

Wymer's face took on a look of stupefied astonishment.

"Not a-goin' to shoot?" he asked, as if failing to comprehend. "Not a-goin' to shoot after what I told you?"

The other did not reply, and after a little Wymer said:

"I didn't tell you, but Dave's a lawyer now. He defended Margie. He says they can't convict me for shootin' Morrisey and Van Verten."

"No, they can't convict you. You are guilty of no crime. Those beasts were conspiring to commit a felony. They were in the act of committing it. Your shooting was justified."

Wymer picked up the gun, offering it to DeWitt.

"But they'll convict me for robbin' the bank. Take the gun and shoot me, DeWitt! I'd rather be dead than get sent up."

DeWitt squared his shoulders.

"We will make the money good to the bank. I will see that there is no prosecution. I cannot permit my daughter's friends to go to the penitentiary."

And now the gun dropped from Wymer's nerveless fingers. He looked helplessly around, as though hopelessly bewildered by the attitude the other was taking. There was a chair a few feet away, and without a word he walked to it and sat down.

"Well, I'll be damn'd!" he ejaculated, after minutes of silence.

"You ain't a-followin' the law, DeWitt," said Wymer after another interval of silence.

"No, I am not following the law," repeated the judge in a far-away tone. "I am waiting for my daughter. Will it be long, do you think, Mr. Wymer?"

"Dave said he'd bring her after he'd told her the story and she'd got over her excitement a little."

"I remember the circumstances very well now, Mr. Wymer," said DeWitt after a while, as though taking up a matter the crook had just mentioned. "That has always been my opinion, but I know differently now."

Wymer eyed him queerly with growing suspicion that DeWitt's mind had been deranged by the shock he had just received.

Judge DeWitt noted the glance and paused. A tremulous smile lighted his face.

"Do not be alarmed. There is nothing wrong with me. I am merely trying to be calm and cool until my daughter comes. She must find me waiting—waiting, with no emotion but love for her." Again he resumed his walking. "You say that her attorney was this Dave you mentioned?"

"Yes. Dave's been through college—studied law there. Never had any people, but

somebody or other left him enough money for schoolin'. He went to the bad over jest natur'ly cravin' excitement, and because he had nobody to tie to. When he met Margie he commenced to regret it, and when we beat it after robbin' the bank he took up his law again."

"I saw her with her arms around him after the trial. She loves him, doesn't she?"

"Yes, and Dave worships her. But don't worry. Dave is big enough to give her up, even if it breaks his heart."

DeWitt paused. There was a grand simplicity in the finality of his tone:

"He shall not give up my daughter if she loves him. She shall have what she wants, and she will want you, too. I heard her call you 'daddy.' We must arrange for you to be near her."

Again walking to and fro, he continued talking.

"Yes, as I said before, I remember the circumstances. I remember what I said: 'Law is the supreme thing in civilization.' I believed that then, and I have always believed it, but I know differently now. There is one factor in life which is more potent, more wonderful, more far-reaching than law, and that factor is love. Love will govern where law fails."

"I remember a night, five years ago," Wymer muttered lowly, "when Dave used them same words."

"Law," continued the judge, as though Wymer had not spoken, "failed to protect me with my child, but your love for her has brought her back to me. Law didn't reform you or Dave, but your love for her did. Law didn't protect my child when at the mercy of two beasts, but love for her sent you flying to her side. Law would send to the penitentiary two men that my daughter loves, but my love for her will protect them. Law is majestic. Love is supreme."

There was a noise at the outer door, then low talking in the hall. Wymer came suddenly to his feet. The judge stood for a moment motionless, then started with firm step toward the dor. A smile, beautiful in its confidence, lighted his face. He glanced at Wymer.

"You will pardon me, Mr. Wymer, while I admit my daughter."

Read

"THE HAND IN THE DARK"

By Charles Fulton Oursler

In Our Next Issue

A MUSICAL BURGLAR

POLICE are seeking a musical burglar who during one week looted at least seven exclusive Chicago residences of thousands of dollars' worth of jewels, brica-brac and money, after first lulling suspicions of neighbors by his rare pianistic technique.

The burglar displayed a large artistry both as a musician and a burglar, according to detectives who investigated his depredations. He cut small holes in glass door panels and jimmied locks with a regard for the woodwork. He revealed a fondness for Verdi's compositions, those who heard him said

At one home he played a score from "Rigoletto" and obtained $700 worth of valuables. At another he rendered a pleasing portion from "La Traviata" and selected with the taste of a connoisseur $1,500 worth of heirlooms and jewelry. In a third home "Aida" was the accompaniment as he helped himself to a collection of costly ornaments. "Il Trovatore" and an improvisation of exceeding promise marked the theft of $1,000 worth of gems at another home.

The burglar sang from "Pagliacci" in a rich, well-modulated baritone as he chose from a collection of rugs, antiques and jewels at two apartments.

How the Bogus Check Writers Work

By HAROLD F. PODHASKI

A FEW days ago a man was arrested in Atlanta, Georgia, by Detective Chief Vic Young, head of the Store's Mutual Protective Association, after he had succeeded in cashing a number of good-sized checks in various of the Atlanta retail stores. He was arrested because these checks all proved to be forgeries, and he told to Mr. Young a most remarkable story concerning his operations throughout the country, a story as interesting as it is unbelievable. And yet investigation of the story by Mr. Young brings to light sufficient information to indicate its truth.

Of that story he told, however, I will have more to say anon. For the present let us follow this man into one of the retail stores and note his efficient methods of operating.

A few days ago he entered one of the large department stores in Atlanta, took the elevator to the clothing department on the fourth floor, and told the salesman who came forward to tender his wants that he was desirous of purchasing a suit—something, he said, for everyday wear, and not to run above $35.

"But," he added apologetically, "the only money I have is an $85 check, and I'd like to know first if you'd be willing to take this check in payment for the suit. If not I don't care to waste my time or yours."

The gentleman was well dressed, had the appearance of a middle-aged man of affairs, but to the salesman he was a perfect stranger, and he, of course, was not empowered to accept a check of this size from a man whom he did not know. But no doubt if the customer would take the matter up with the manager of the department it could be satisfactorily arranged.

To the manager of the department this gentleman said approximately what he had to the salesman, and also vouched a little additional information regarding himself and the check in question. "You see," he went on to explain, "I'm in somewhat of a quandary. I didn't receive this check until a few minutes ago, and as it's after banking hours, I don't know where to cash it; I am a stranger in Atlanta." And then he went on to say that he was a traveling auditor for a well-known New York company, and that the check represented his weekly salary, whereupon he brought forth the check for the manager's inspection.

The man's story sounded entirely plausible, and the manager at once proceeded to examine the $85 slip of paper. It was one of this New York company's regular checks, the name of the company printed across the top of it, a rubber stamp with the same name on the signature line, and it was both signed and countersigned by the treasurer and the president of the company respectively, or at least their names were upon it, whether or not they may have written them there themselves. In the upper left-hand corner of the check in space provided for such entries, that the check might also serve as a receipt, appeared a notation to the effect that the amount thereon represented salary, the dates given being for the previous week.

Yes, the check was entirely O.K., so the manager thought; no doubt about that. In fact, almost any business man inspecting it, or any banker, would have said the same if he didn't happen to be familiar with the signatures of the two gentlemen there. The only thing that now remained was for the gentleman to establish his own identity, and that done the manager would be very glad to accept the check in payment for the suit.

The gentleman was fully prepared to do this, and in a manner so absolutely convincing that even the most skeptical of persons must have cherished no further doubt but that he was exactly what he represented himself to be—a traveling auditor employed by a New York company on which the check was drawn.

In the first place, he showed a small portfolio which contained all of the paraphernalia such as an auditor might carry, and all of it bearing the imprint of his New York company. He had a telegram, too, that was apparently in answer to one he had sent his company, and which stated that his salary check had been mailed from New York City on Tuesday afternoon, and should be delivered to him at the Piedmont Hotel, where he was stopping, on Thursday. It had arrived all right, as the telegram stated, but rather late in the afternoon, when the banks were closed. He even showed the envelope bearing the New York post-mark of the previous Tuesday and a brief letter that had accompanied the check; this letter also was on the company's stationery and bore the signature of the president in precisely the same handwriting as appeared on the check.

Do you think that it would have been possible for this man to offer any more convincing proof of his identity and of the genuineness of this check? Would not any business man have accepted that check at its face value without further ado?

Most certainly he would, and the manager of the clothing department was no exception. He put his O.K. on the check, the suit was duly purchased and delivered to the customer at the hotel that same afternoon. Its price was $34, and he received therefore in change $51 in cash from the check.

And yet, in spite of all this convincing proof, in spite of the fact that there seemed to be no doubt whatever as to the genuineness of this check, it proved to be a forgery.

And right here is where the retail merchants of this country find themselves up against a problem of far greater magnitude than most business men realize—the bad check problem. It is a problem, too, that is costing the retail business of this country hundreds of thousands of dollars, perhaps even millions, every year, and it is a problem that comes very near to being beyond solution.

The question is, how can the wheat be separated from the chaff? How can the good checks be told from the bad, when the professional forger operates on so thorough a system as in the case referred to above? Offers proof that would undoubtedly convince the most skeptical of persons?

Well, the answer is simple—and negative. It can't be done. When the merchant is dealing with the professional crook—and a big majority of the bogus checks are presented by professionals—it is practically impossible to separate the wheat from the chaff unless one is willing to go to a considerable amount of trouble in doing so. And even then there are other obstacles in the way aside from the trouble that is occasioned in the making of such an investigation.

It would be necessary, for instance, if the merchant was desirous of making *absolutely* certain of all checks presented, to thus investigate *every* check without exception wherein the slightest doubt might exist; and in doing so he would likely lose about fifty per cent. of these sales, for there is nothing in the world at which the average person will more quickly take offense than to have a doubt thus evidenced as regards his honesty—or what, at least, would certainly seem so to him. Could the average person but realize the magnitude of this bad check problem, the tremendous amount of money merchants lose in this way every year, they would be far less inclined to take offense. But they do not realize it, and such a method, therefore, would doubtless cost the merchant in loss of trade considerably more in the long run than would be the loss he would suffer in the acceptance of the checks in question. The principal point to be remembered is that the great majority of the checks will turn out to be entirely O.K., so this method of separating the wheat from the chaff seems to be more or less impractical considering the time and the

trouble involved and the possibility of causing the legitimate customers offense.

The one sure way of solving this problem, of course, would be to refuse all checks of which the slightest doubt may exist. But this method, too, is impractical, even more so than the plan mentioned above. The largest part of the business transacted in the retail stores is by checks, and when the merchant refuses to accept checks of which he is not absolutely certain he is practically driving business away from his doors—a tremendous lot of it, too.

And then, on the other hand, there is really no method by which one can be absolutely certain of *any* check unless one is personally acquainted with the party presenting it, for the simple reason that your professional check artist can almost invariably offer you more convincing proof than your legitimate customer. With him this thing is a profession, and he is equally as proficient at it as the doctor is in matters medical, or the lawyer in matters legal. He knows his business in its every minute detail, and he is prepared for practically any emergency that may arise.

Consider, for instance, the case of the chap referred to at the beginning of this article—the man who cashed the $85 check in the Atlanta department store.

We have here a man operating a bogus check business on what seems to be a somewhat extensive and elaborate scale.

He represents himself as the traveling auditor of a well-known company; he presents one of his company's regular checks duly signed and countersigned, and which, on the face of it, is apparently as "good as gold"; he establishes his identity, or seems to at least, in a manner that is positively convincing; to cap the climax he shows a telegram referring to this check, a letter on the company's own stationery which accompanied it, and even the envelope bearing the New York post-mark of two days before, which substantiates the statement made in the telegram, appears to leave not a single loophole for doubt.

As a matter of truth one would be inclined to believe that this fellow rather overdid it. And yet, would not any business man accept the proof he offered as practically conclusive? Certainly he would, and gladly at that if it meant the sale of a $35 suit.

Now, then, let us see just how this thing was done.

As I have previously stated, this fellow, who tried his plan once too often in Atlanta and was ultimately arrested, told a somewhat remarkable story, but a story that investigation would indicate to be true, or at least partially so.

According to the story related by this crook, there is a company actually operating in New York City whose sole stock in trade is bogus checks. They have representatives in various parts of the country like any legitimate enterprise who do nothing in the world but travel from city to city cashing these bogus checks in retail stores. The company furnishes each of its representatives with the complete paraphernalia which enables him to get away with it; this paraphernalia includes several thousand dollars' worth of forged checks all drawn on well-known companies and exact duplicates of the checks these companies use; the documents by which the man is apparently able to prove his identity and the truth of the story he tells; and to further back him up the company sends him the letters and telegrams, etc., purporting to come from the particular company on which the check is drawn.

For all checks which he cashes this traveling representative receives a certain commission of the total amount, subtracting this as he goes along and sending the remainder to the "home office" in New York. And in the event of his arrest the company, according to its agreement with him, furnishes his bond, this usually being forfeited when the time comes for trial.

This is the story that was related to Vic Young by this particular check artist, and there is reason to believe that it is true. That such a company, or syndicate, actually does exist seems to be somewhat beyond the realms of reason, but nevertheless it apparently does exist and is doing a flourishing business. At any rate, it did exist at the time of this fellow's apprehension,

though whether it has since been run to earth I cannot say.

More than $4,000 worth of bogus checks were found on this man, all of them the regular printed checks of well-known companies, duly made out for amounts varying from $25 to $100, signed, countersigned, and all that. Furthermore, he had in his possession stationery and literature of these various companies, and apparently could have proved conclusively his connection with any one of them.

Most assuredly this bogus check business is becoming a serious problem indeed when a syndicate finds it a sufficiently profitable business to operate on an extensive and systematic scale like this; to send men out on the road as its traveling representatives who are every day passing bogus checks in the retail stores of this country.

But how this problem can be successfully solved is the big question. The merchant is up against it here, for he can hardly refuse to accept checks when the biggest part of his business is transacted on that basis; nor can he afford to offend his trade by adopting the other course as previously outlined. Truly he seems to be between the devil and the deep blue sea any way you look at it.

Another recent case that will show you how systematic these check artists are in the conduct of their business, how well they are prepared to meet almost any emergency to prove that they are one thing when in truth they are exactly the opposite, is that of a man who presented a $60 check in an Atlanta store after making purchases amounting to $18. The check was an out-of-town company, and appeared to be entirely O.K. He told, too, a plausible story, and offered comparatively convincing proof as to his identity. But to make this proof still more conclusive he gave to the floor manager of the store whose O.K. on the check was necessary before it could be cashed the name and telephone number of a well-known local attorney; at least, the floor manager presumed that the telephone number was that of the attorney.

"If you'll just call up Mr. Blank I'm sure he will tell you that I am all right," the check artist informed the manager. "He knows me quite well, and I suppose you'd be willing to take his word for it, wouldn't you?"

"Oh, yes, there would be no doubt whatever about that," the floor manager at once told him. He knew Mr. Blank by reputation, and if Mr. Blank said the gentleman was all right that would settle it.

Whereupon he called up the number the other had given him, asked for Mr. Blank, and was presently informed by a party whom he supposed to be that gentleman that Mr. So-and-So's check could be safely accepted.

Now, as a matter of truth, the phone number was *not* Mr. Blank's number at all, but that of a confederate, and when the floor manager thought he was talking to Mr. Blank he was really talking to this check artist's partner in crime. Had he taken the trouble to look up Mr. Blank's telephone number he would have saved his firm $42 in cash and $18 worth of merchandise, but who would ever suspect such a trick? Probably not one out of 100 men would have looked up the number. It only goes to show how thorough these fellows sometimes are, how well they are prepared to cope with almost any emergency that may arise.

A common method of operation by which check artists find it comparatively easy to get money in department stores or large specialty stores is to stand around the counters presumably looking at merchandise, until they hear some customer give a name and address for a purchase just made that is to be delivered. They will then follow this party to some other department and watch closely to see whether or not the customer may be known personally to any of the clerks in that department. If the customer does not seem to be personally known and passes on to another part of the store without making any purchases in this department, the crook is then ready to operate.

First, he or she, as the case may be, will look up this party's name in the telephone book, and if there happens to be a phone, will at once memorize the number. He will then go back to the department, purchase some minor article or two and give the

name and address he heard a few moments before, asking that the merchandise be delivered with other articles that have already been purchased elsewhere in the store, a fact which the clerk can very easily and quickly verify. A check will then be written and this party's name signed thereto. The check will be for a small amount, say four or five dollars above the purchase price. If the clerk asks for the telephone number, as is usually done when checks are presented by unknown persons, the crook is at once able to give the correct number. Seldom does he experience any difficulty in the operation of this scheme, for he is using the bona fide name, address and telephone number of one of the store's customers and writing his checks for a small enough sum that they are not likely to be seriously questioned. His only risk is that he may present a check to some clerk who happens to be personally acquainted with the customer in question.

Doubtless one of the primary reasons this bad check evil has become so serious a problem lies in the fact that most merchants are inclined to be lenient with those unfortunate enough to be caught in the act, providing their losses are made good to them. And yet we can hardly blame the merchant when the facts in the case are considered. The culprit frequently offers to make restitution if the charge is not pressed, and when the merchant has the matter put up to him in dollars and cents he is quite apt to lend a listening ear to that appeal. If he presses the charge and sends the culprit "up the river," where he certainly belongs, he has little or practically no chance of ever recovering his money. And for that reason this particular class of crooks more frequently wiggle out of the net than otherwise.

If convictions for forgery were more frequent, if merchants would regard this matter from its moral side rather than its financial, if they would steel their hearts against the "hard luck" stories they so often hear, if they would show less leniency and press charges against check forgers with a greater vim than has been their custom, much good would be accomplished in bringing about the abatement of the evil.

The moral effect of frequent convictions would automatically accomplish that result. But until this is done the bad check evil is very likely to remain a serious problem, and a costly one for the retail business of this country.

MYSTERY OF A LIGHT

THE mystery of the light that has been kept burning thirty-two years in the vestibule of the old Walters mansion on Mount Vernon Place, Baltimore, Md., may be cleared up by the death recently of Mrs. Jennie Walters Delano, aged 70, at her home, 39 East Thirty-sixth street, New York City. She was the daughter of the late William T. Walters, millionaire founder of the Walters Art Gallery, which is connected to the residence, in front of which the light burns day and night. As the story goes, it is alleged Walters objected to his daughter's marriage to Delano, and in his will cut her off. But the "perpetual light" made its appearance soon after her wedding, and it was said by those professing intimate knowledge of the family's affairs that it represented repentance on the father's part —a repentance which he would not put into words.

It was said Mrs. Delano's brother, Henry Walters, of New York and Baltimore, gave her one-half the vast fortune left by their father. Members of the family have denied the disinheritance story.

The aged caretaker at the mansion refused to discuss the mysterious light with anybody, and it still burns. The mansion, magnificently furnished with costly bronze front doors, has not been occupied for years.

Another explanation given years ago concerning the light was that it would continue to burn as long as a member of the Walters family lived.

SMALL FEET

by

JACK J. GOTTLIEB

A HEAVY-SET man, tall, slouch-hatted, loose of raiment, stood on the stone platform of Central Station, St. Louis.

Half a black cigar jutted from between his thick red lips, but he was not smoking. The weed was unlighted. Now and then the lapels of his coat, flapping a bit in the cool breeze, displayed the edge of a steely something which glinted in the autumnal sun. He stood leaning against a post, inconspicuous as his large frame would permit him to be, watching the incoming Pullman with a rapt look, the look of a vulture watching for prey—a gaze of chill precision that was certain not to miss the tiniest thing in its vision.

He stirred a little as the train came to a dignified stop. There were not many people in the station. As the few passengers—passengers no longer now—alighted from the train he watched them, those bleak, all-seeing eyes of his roving here, there, everywhere.

It was just as the train started pulling out that a tensity of expression came to him. For the least fraction of a moment he hesitated, then he moved forward quickly, with a springiness in his step that may or may not have been habitual. He hurried over to where a well-dressed young couple, just on the point of leaving the station, stood before a turnstile. He placed a restraining hand on the shoulder of the young man.

"Not so fast there, friend," said he sharply, with a triteness in his husky voice that was grim. "Where you aimin' to take this young lady?"

The man swerved about sharply; the hand on his shoulder acted upon him much as a live wire would have done. A sudden flush tinged his well-shaven cheeks. But he regained his composure almost immediately. His thin lips—the loose lips of the crook—set in a hard line.

"Just what do you mean by that?" he demanded aggressively.

"I mean you're under arrest," the heavy-set man informed him crisply. "You understand *that*, don't you?"

"Arrest! What for?"

"For violatin' the Mann Act, that's what. You answer the description of the bird we've been told to look for, sure enough. Young man, good-lookin', light hair, blue eyes, good dresser. Has so many aliases they don't know what to call him. Will you come along quietly now?"

"Just a minute!" Wrath fairly bubbled over the young man. "Who are you?"

"Detective Henderson, seventeenth precinct." Henderson flipped up the lapel of

his coat, displaying a badge. "Come on, now!"

"Hold on! There's some gigantic mistake here, I'm sure. I am not the man you want." He fished in a pocket and produced a card. "There! That's my name—John Brillheart. I'm a respectable citizen, and not a white slave promoter, as you assert."

"None o' your lip, now!" growled the plain-clothesman. "You can't get away with stuff like that—not on *me*. I know a liar when I hear one. Come along, or I'll have to handcuff you two together and use force."

The young man's fists were clenched.

"Listen here, officer. You're making a big mistake. This lady is my wife."

"Your wife, eh?" laughed the big man. "That's what they all say. What have you to say, girlie?"

"Don't speak like that to my wife!" cried John Brillheart angrily.

But Henderson ignored him. "How 'bout it? You his wife?"

"I am!" said the young woman. There were tears in her voice; she glanced about apprehensively at the few persons who stood here and there watching them curiously.

"Sure 'bout it? Sure he didn't persuade you to say it, case you ran up 'gainst such a predicament?"

"He's my husband! You're blundering!"

"Blunderin', eh?" Henderson laughed. He gripped Brillheart's sleeve in a vise-like grasp. "You're a slick one, young fella. The chief told me 'bout you. Come on, now!"

"We're not going!" declared the young man desperately.

"The devil you ain't! Listen here. Do y' want me to drag you to the street, put you in the hands of a couple of cops while I telephone for the wagon and get you to the station that way? Or do y' want to come along quietly, with no excitement."

"Go on; drag us," averred the young man stubbornly. "I'll not go willingly. I'm not the man you say I am. But I warn you, if you humiliate my wife and me you'll pay for it."

"All right, then." Henderson shoved them ahead roughly. But the young woman, despair written on her finely molded features, put up her hand in protest.

"Wait! John, this is all a terrible mistake, of course, but why should we be humbled before the street crowds? We can fix everything up quietly at the police station, I'm sure. We'll go quietly, officer."

"That's the right way to look at it," acceded Henderson. "Still insist you're his wife?"

"I most certainly do!"

"Maybe you're right, at that. When were you married?"

"Only this morning."

"Thought so," grinned Henderson. "Bogus marriage, that was. Maybe the hundredth one he married like that."

The young woman's pretty face flushed; she glanced at John Brillheart uneasily. Brillheart said nothing. He seemed resigned, but there was a whiteness in his cheeks and a certain tautness about his lips which hinted of great dormant determination. With Henderson separating him from the girl, he allowed himself to be led.

They crossed over Market street into Seventh, where noonday crowds jostled their elbows, and went south four blocks. Presently Henderson spoke, and there was mirth in his voice:

"The chief'll have a fine welcome for you, friend!"

"Your chief will let us go as soon as he finds out I am not the person he wants, and will give you a fine reprimanding," John Brillheart growled.

"Maybe so," chuckled Henderson. "But you'll get it in the neck, too. The police reporters——"

The young woman suddenly exclaimed in dismay:

"John! We can't afford any publicity!"

"Listen here!" said Brillheart impatiently, stopping in his tracks and reaching a hand in his pocket. "How much will you take to let us go if I give you my word I'm not the man you are looking for?"

"What are y' tryin' to do—bribe me?" flared Henderson.

"Not so loud! Everybody will be looking at us in a minute. No, I'm not trying to bribe you. I'm trying to make you see the

predicament we're in. We know we'll be released as soon as we get to the station and identify ourselves, but, as you hint, there'll be an ugly blot attached to the affair, anyway. 'Mr. and Mrs. Brillheart arrested for white-slave trafficking.'" Brillheart groaned. "My God, man, you've got to let us out."

Henderson glanced about cautiously, then lowered his voice:

"Tell you what. Slip me a couple o' hundred, and you're as free as air."

"But I haven't that much with me. I've only a hundred—a hundred and four dollars, to be exact."

"How 'bout the young lady? Hasn't she any dough?"

"No. My wife has no money with her at all."

"Then give me what you got—the hundred dollars. I'll let you keep the four bucks."

"And you'll let us go?"

"I'll let you go."

"You will, will you?" John Brillheart suddenly hissed. "All right, friend blackmailer! A nice bunco game, but you happened to pick on the wrong couple this time. Don't make a move, or I will riddle you like a practice target."

There was a grim smile on his lips, and the hand in his pocket, enfolded about a hidden object, bulged ominously. With fear in his eyes Henderson stared down at the bulge of the pocket. He looked about him wildly, as though meditating escape, but Brillheart's next words made him see the futility of trying to make a break for it.

"Move a step, and I'll drop you as sure as my name's Brillheart. A good joke this is, but it's on you! Out of everybody in the city you had to go and pick on a headquarters agent. Why, I know almost every fly-cop in this town, and those I don't know Rhoda Penn here does. I was wise to you as soon as you spoke the second time, and I gave Miss Penn the high sign to lead you on. Well, now! So you'll take a hundred bucks, eh? Turn around now and walk. We're marching straight to headquarters!"

"So you're dicks yourself, eh?" sneered "Detective" Henderson, who had regained his assurance.

"Step lively!" ordered Brillheart. "Else we'll do that with which you threatened us a while ago—call the wagon."

"Wait a minute! Maybe we can patch this up, eh?"

"That's another offense, bribing an officer! Move along!"

"I'll give you a hundred to let me go."

"Get on, now!"

"Two hundred!"

"I told you——"

"I'll give you every dollar I got—two hundred and forty bucks—if you'll only let me go. How 'bout it?".

"Take it, John!" the young woman whispered to Brillheart. "We'll be able to furnish a flat with that."

"Then you really are married?" asked Henderson with a leer.

"Yes; we told you the truth about that," Brillheart snapped. "We were married this morning."

"Why'd you call her 'Miss' for, then?"

"All in the game," growled Brillheart. "Where's your money?"

"I got it."

"Walk down that side street. You can hand it to me there. And remember, if you make a break I'll drop you."

Ten minutes later "Slick" Barrows, alias John Brillheart, and Tessie King, alias Rhoda Penn, alias Mrs. Brillheart—as smooth a pair of quick-witted thieves as ever moved and talked—hurried away towards the city's busy section. In the pocket of Barrows there reposed the two hundred and forty dollars they had allowed the pseudo-detective to "bribe" them with, and on his face there lingered a smugly satisfied smile.

"Good thing I had that card of Brillheart's with me," he chuckled. "Not a bad day's work, eh, Tess?"

"Not at all," Tessie King laughed. "You worked it neat, boy, though that poor fish was a bit too gullible, at that. He should have known you didn't have a gun in your coat pocket, but something or other that bulged like a gun."

"My handkerchief! It fooled him neatly! What a simp he is!"

"How'd you know he wasn't a detective, Slick?"

Slick Barrows chuckled.

"By his badge, for one thing. I noticed it was fake—shone too much like tin. It didn't look anything like Herk's or Torlin's. And then he acted too feeble when I refused to accompany him willingly. Why, he almost *begged* us not to make a scene. A real dick wouldn't have hesitated a minute to call the wagon.

"But I was certain he was playing a game, that he wasn't a real cop, when I looked at his feet. Did you ever see a bull with such small feet? Why, ordinarily such a big man would wear a ten size shoe, and his foot—I'll bet it wasn't more than a seven. I never yet ran across a fly-cop as big as him with a seven foot. Those birds have the biggest feet in the world!"

"Why, you've very small feet yourself, Slick. If you noticed his and knew by that he wasn't a bull," she reasoned, "then he might've known the same about you. He might've known you weren't a bull, either."

"That's so. You're right, Tess. I've exceptionally small feet myself. And come to think of it, he did seem to be too easily duped."

"If he knew we weren't what you said we were, Slick, he wouldn't have paid over the money!"

Barrows stopped in his tracks, looked at the girl open-eyed. Then his hand darted in his pocket, and he drew out the money he had received from Henderson. Examining it, he suddenly exclaimed in dismay:

"Stung, Tess! This money is counterfeit!"

—— Read ——

"LUCK IN DETECTING CRIMINALS"
By Carl Getz
In Our Next Number

LIFER WHO REFORMED

BETRAYED by his daughter, because he ran her sweetheart away from his home, Jesse Sanderson, 50 years old, was on his way to Baton Rouge, La., recently to spend the remaining years of his life in prison.

Sanderson, convicted of murder and sentenced in 1901 to life imprisonment for the crime, escaped from the Louisiana prison in 1903. He made his way to Caruthersville, Mo., where he rehabilitated himself.

He married, reared a family, joined a church and became a respected member of the community. He lived the quiet, peaceful life of a small town, but always overshadowing his happiness was the spectre of fear of discovery of his identity.

He told his wife of his misdeeds and his daughter learned of Sanderson's criminal past.

Recently, when Sanderson objected to a young man who was courting his daughter, the girl in a spirit of revenge wrote to the prison authorities in Baton Rouge and told where to find the fugitive.

No one at the penitentiary recalled Sanderson's case and musty records were scanned for several days before he was identified as the man who had made a sensational prison break nineteen years ago.

Sanderson was sentenced to life imprisonment for killing a man named Kingsley. They were neighboring farmers, and quarreled over the ownership of a plow. Sanderson says he killed in self-defense.

"My family was poor and could not defend me, so I went over the road," Sanderson said.

"My only hope is that my good record for the last nineteen years will win a pardon for me. I can't believe they'll make me spend the rest of my life in a cell after I have lived straight all these years."

The Fall of a Forger

A RECENT news report stated that the American Bankers Association had been paying an annuity to Charley Fischer, a notorious old forger, to quit his depredations against the banks. This report was denied by the executive manager of the association.

"There is absolutely no basis of fact for this report," he said. "The American Bankers Association conducts a protective department to prevent and prosecute criminal activities against banks who are members of the association, with the idea of safeguarding property and bringing just punishment to offenders. It is no part of the work of the association to buy off criminals directly or indirectly.

"The rules of the department expressly provide that no case once committed by a member bank to the association can be taken out of its hands, nor the offense condoned or compromised. Much less would a blanket compromise with the criminal proclivities of any crook by means of money tribute be entered into by the association. The only pension list the association has is one for retired employees in recognition for long and meritorious services."

The reference to Fischer as a pensioner was in a report of his arraignment at the bar of justice in the court of special sessions recently. The police had caught him dropping a brass slug in a subway turnstile.

The old crook was 70 years of age, bent, gray-haired and broken down. With the dignity of an international reputation, a man feared by bankers of both continents, the humility of his arrest must have been bitter indeed, for he was sentenced to ten days on the island for cheating the Interborough out of a nickel. The old crook's history is intensely interesting.

His nimble fingers were schooled in an art more subtle than slipping phony money into slot machines. His pen could mimic a professor's fine Spencerian hand with equal fidelity. Bank cashiers all over the country feared him.

The police records show that his criminal career began when he was a boy of twelve in Germany. There he began to pilfer small objects from his schoolmates and his grandfather. A little later, while employed in his uncle's store, he learned to imitate the handwriting on checks and money orders so successfully that soon he had acquired passage money to the United States.

Within a few months he had organized his own little band of forgers. Their bad checks fluttered over the country like a snowstorm. Banks and merchants were victims. Arrested for some minor offense, Fischer first suffered a period of detention in the House of Refuge, then served a term in the penitentiary. That was in 1876. Emerging, he began operations again with his check-passing companions. In search of a certification stamp used by banks, he broke a plate glass window one night, was arrested and sentenced to jail again.

Fischer was rarely caught for his pen peculations in the early days. It was not until his band had garnered more than $100,000 through a check-forging scheme, worked in many cities throughout the United States, that the police finally arrested him and his gang in 1880.

Serving a term for that series of forgeries, he made the acquaintance in prison of Billy Hamilton, another famous forger. Together they planned fresh onslaughts against bank treasuries when their terms expired. They toured the country together and made many thousands of dollars.

Afterwards Fischer transferred his oper-

ations abroad, serving several terms in London for various offenses.

In later years Fischer obtained clemency from the police on several occasions by "squealing" on his associates. But after serving brief terms in the penitentiary he was always in a hurry to resume his forging as soon as he emerged after his sentence was completed.

In 1920 he was arrested by an ambitious young detective who sought to fasten upon him the guilt of a recent forgery. But he proved his innocence. His subway misadventure was the first time he had run afoul of the police in several years.

Fischer had a fairly good defense. He explained that he was a telephone clerk in the Yale Club and that in his duties he was required to handle small brass checks. His failing eyesight and general old age had caused him to confuse one of the checks for a nickel, he said. It was purely unintentional.

But Justices Herbert, Hermann and Freschi decided that Fischer once again had transgressed the law, and sent him to prison.

INGENIOUS HABITS OF SMUGGLERS

NO article since duties were first levied offers such temptation to the smuggler as saccharin, partly because of the high duty on it, which amounts to $5 a pound, and partly because it lends itself so easily to concealment.

Saccharin has taken the place of tobacco, says the London *Standard*. Under ordinary circumstances saccharin, which is reckoned to be three hundred times sweeter than sugar, is imported in at least four different forms, the characteristic properties of which are: A white glistening crystalline powder, a dull white powder resembling icing sugar, a white coarse granular powder, and crystals in small pieces of various sizes, similar in appearance to common alum.

Saccharin may be said to be illicitly imported in three principal ways. First, by the ordinary process of concealment; second, held in suspension or in solution in other goods, and third, under various chemical aliases and entered as free of duty. In regard to the first method, when it is remembered that a pound of saccharin, the duty on which is $5, can be comfortably stowed away in one's waistcoat pocket, the wide field open to the smuggler can be readily imagined.

Saccharin has been found concealed in the centre of bags of starch and sacks of flour, in sacks of potatoes, in casks of resin, casks of fish offal, in cases ingeniously made up to represent the tops of tables, in bottles labelled "Health Salts," a small quantity of that article being placed on top to disguise the contents; in phosphates, in ingots of potash salt, of sulphamide benzoic acid, made up in the shape and appearance of night lights, in bags of sugar, even in bamboo canes, in fact, in almost every imaginable variety of casks and packages.

It is also to be feared that a considerable illicit traffic in this highly dutiable article is carried on by passengers passing to and from the Continent, and the means resorted to are as various as they are ingenious. In one recent case a passenger was discovered wearing a tight fitting calico vest next his skin containing seven pounds of saccharin. In another case a belt passing in coils around the body was the means employed.

But the difficulties which confront the customs officers in regard to the personal running of saccharin are light indeed when we consider the innumerable articles of commerce in which it may be utilized or held in solution and imported free of duty. In such cases, as a rule, it is the analyst alone who can tell. Saccharin may be used in canned and bottled fruits, in aerated waters, in brandy, in syrup, in confectionery, in wafer paper, even in cigarette papers. It comes in biscuits, chocolate, cocoa powder, marmalade, preserves, marzipan and thirst tablets. It is held in solution in glycerine, acetone, water and a host of other solvents.

The TOCSIN at TWELVE

by HAMILTON CRAIGIE

CHAPTER ONE

PRIOR to the death of his benefactor and associate, old Peter Arbuthnot, Esmond Thane had had the appearance of a man well into the forties. His thick black beard, cut and trimmed after the fashion of the early eighties, had been largely responsible for this; with the beard gone Thane looked easily ten years younger, but that was not the point.

It was characteristic of Thane that he had planned every step of his way months in advance with a cold, careful deliberation that had taken account of every last thing that he would do. Following his attack on the aged millionaire, and with the cold currency in his pocket, Thane had shaved himself, carefully, deliberately, not six feet from where the body lay, with a razor which he had brought for the purpose.

Botulism had done it; deadlier and quicker than prussic acid. The half-opened tin on the table of a well-known brand of potted duck, the half-empty plate—these, together with Peter Arbuthnot's precise habit of a solitary cold snack in the small hours, would occasion nothing more than a verdict of accidental death.

Thane had gotten that tin in a roundabout way that would never bring him into the matter. Arbuthnot, an eccentric of the eccentrics, lived alone in a small flat in the suburbs, and there had been several cases lately in the press of accidental poisoning by this very means.

But Thane was taking no chances. Shaving now, with quick, firm strokes of the razor, his task finished, he gazed at himself in the mirror, and a face sprang out at him that was not merely young, different, but a face that he had never seen before!

It was the face of a stranger, even to Esmond Thane, for the point was that the beard had given to his features a false roundness that was belied now by the staring hollows in the cheeks, the sunken mouth.

His disguise was perfect, because he was, in effect, another man, a new man, a stranger, even to himself.

Thane was a creature of habit. Forehanded by nature, he had consulted the almanac a month previous. It had told him that the morning of January 1st, 1923, would be moonless; that between moonset at 5:50 and sunrise at 6:32 he would have at the shortest a good thirty minutes of darkness, the better to cloak his visit, if that were necessary, from prying eyes.

At midnight precisely Thane had arisen at the first warning of his alarm clock to go on duty at one at the copy desk of a Metropolitan daily. The usual shift was from eight until four, but Thane's job was a rather odd one. He had had it arranged, after some little difficulty, three months in the past. And he knew, too, that Peter Arbuthnot's lifelong habit had always been to arise promptly at six, rain or shine, winter or summer, to make himself a cold snack at that hour, his one servant never arriving until seven-thirty.

The previous evening Thane had told his landlady that he was going on a journey. He had reported at the city room of his paper at the usual hour, checking his bag, however, with his few personal belongings, including his alarm clock, at the parcels counter of the Pennsylvania station at 33d street. And going off duty promptly at four, he had eaten a leisurely breakfast at an all-night restaurant, timing his arrival at Arbuthnot's flat in that darkest hour just before the dawn—the dawn indeed of a new to-morrow for Esmond Thane.

His shaving finished, he listened a moment at the door; then opening it, inch by careful inch, he hesitated for the first time as he stepped noiselessly into the silent hall.

It was an old-fashioned "walk-up"; at this hour of the morning, between six and six-thirty, silent, dark. A pin-point of gas burned at the stair-head, fluttering in the draft. As Thane looked it seemed for a moment that his shadow, distorted, monstrous, flung now upon floor and wall in sable silhouette, was curiously misshapen. It seemed like a sable figure that moved and swayed, as a body swings to the slow spin of a rigid rope, and above it the black shadow of a cap.

But if Thane had been superstitious he might have told himself that it had been a trick of the light and the leaping shadows. Anyway, it would be the chair, and not the rope, in the State of New York.

When he looked again the shadow was just a shadow, and nothing more. But for a moment, unimaginative as he was, he shivered as, according to the ancient superstition, a man is said to shiver when some one is walking over his grave. And it was not cold.

"Ugh!" muttered Thane to himself, and with his hand upon the door-knob again he hesitated, listening, holding his breath.

A step had sounded on the stair; some one was coming up.

It was as yet too early for the arrival of the dead man's single servant, but the house echoed at all hours of the day and night to silent incomings and outgoings. And if by chance his presence should be noticed! As Esmond Thane he had shut the door upon his past; nobody would recognize him now.

The door, a spring-lock affair, once shut could not again be opened, save with a key. And Thane had no further business with old Peter Arbuthnot. But for a split second, with the thought that it was just possible that he had left a clue behind him, there in that silent chamber of the dead, his fingers tightened upon the door-knob.

But, pshaw! it was not possible.

The footsteps were nearer now as Thane, with a quick, decisive gesture, pressed shut the heavy door. The lock clicked. It was done.

He turned now, walking down the flight, passing a dim shape that went by him like a sliding ghost. But he was safe, safe, he told himself; nothing and nobody could touch him now. No eye had seen him leaving Arbuthnot's flat. The body would not be discovered until the aged servitor's arrival. He would have time and to spare.

But again, as he issued from that house, brooding now in the dense darkness, its windows like blind eyes to the night, he was conscious of a something out of place. It was like a vague, entering wedge of doubt and abrupt unease; he could not put his finger on it.

CHAPTER TWO

THANE had every step of his way mapped out long in advance. A fine rain was beginning to fall as, proceeding to the station, he put down his bag check with-

out comment, together with the amount of the fee.

The clerk, a young-old individual with a sleepy-lidded stare, surveyed Thane for a moment with what the latter fancied was a shade of interest. But it was nothing unusual for articles to be redeemed by individuals other than those depositing them.

Still in Thane's fancy there was a certain interest in the clerk's stare. But what was there to fear? The clerk, if it was the same who had received his bag, had never seen him save as Esmond Thane, and the bag check was but a number, and nothing more. But for the first time in his careful planning he experienced a twinge of abrupt unease as the bag came sliding up the chute.

"Ten cents, mister," remarked the clerk with a bored and languid air. And then for a second Thane's heart was in his mouth.

Out of the tail of his eye he had seen a thick-set, blocky figure at his elbow, the grizzled head; the eye, gimlet-hard, like a steel probe, was turned now, as he fancied, upon himself.

That unforgettable profile—he would have known it among a thousand: Old Lens-Eye Lindeman, the detective who never forgot a face.

And Lindeman had seen him, talked with him, not once, but several times, there at the copy desk in the city room of the *Daily Meteor*. Thane heard the clerk's voice in greeting; it appeared to come as from dim leagues of distance:

"Fine night for a crime it'll be if this rain keeps up, Mr. Lindeman," he had said.

It was enough, and more than enough. Cold and unemotional as he was, both by habit and training, Thane felt his blood freeze slowly to ice as, bag in hand, he turned casually toward the long ramp and the street. As he went he could feel in imagination the hand on his shoulder, summoning him to judgment; the murmur of voices reached him in low-pitched converse:

"Sure I'd know him, Mr. Lindeman. I could never forget that face."

And even while his cold reason and common sense told him that it was some one else they were discussing, abruptly he felt again those eyes, this time boring into his back.

But nothing happened.

Coming out into the rush and hurry of Seventh avenue, Thane, by a circuitous route, arrived at a small hotel near the water front. This, too, was according to schedule. Confident that he had laid a herring, if an invisible one, across his trail, that would set at naught any possible pursuit, he went immediately to his room.

To-morrow he would begin the first leg of his journey out, beyond. The copy desk would see him no more, and even if that verdict of accidental death were changed to murder, they would never find Esmond Thane, for as such he no longer existed.

Everything that could possibly connect him with his former existence he had destroyed or gotten rid of; his linen, by the simple expedient of sending it to the laundry and never calling for it; the remnant of his beard calcined to nothingness in Arbuthnot's fireplace, always itself filled with an untidy litter of odds and ends, charred remnants, papers.

But his encounter with Lindeman had left him curiously shaken—a prey, for the first time in his well-ordered existence, to a certain vague unease, an entering wedge of apprehension and faint doubt.

And again at the back of his brain memory strove with the recollection of something out of place, done and then forgotten. But he could not summon it.

It was a mean room in a third-class hotel. Thane, turning to the mirror, found merely a cracked and broken substitute that gave back his image in a blurred and distorted mimicry of likeness. Back there at Arbuthnot's he had been able to see himself as he was, but there had been little time for an extended survey. Here and now it would be different.

Searching, he discovered a hand-mirror in a bureau drawer. But his fingers, somehow, were all thumbs; the mirror, sliding from his grasp, smashed in a dozen pieces.

Thane gave a wry grimace.

"Seven years' bad luck, eh?" he murmured with a twisted smile.

If he had been able to see his face as it

was, but he had not been able. Abruptly he remembered that he had brought a copy of that day's issue of the paper with him from the city room, but he could not find it. Well, after all, it mattered little. Musing, he visualized the story of Arbuthnot's death as he would have handled it; as a rewrite man he would have been a good one. Well, that was all over now, and with to-morrow would come the dawn—the dawn of a new to-morrow for Esmond Thane.

As the gray day wore on to evening after a little he unpacked his bag, picking up the alarm clock, the visible symbol of his past servitude, with a twisted smile. Well, he'd have little use for it—after to-morrow. But the habit of a lifetime is strong.

Esmond Thane was by no means a drinker, but he had brought a pint of contraband with him against contingencies. And he'd certainly earned at least one little drink, he told himself. Well, two then. Pah! That was strong stuff, and no mistake! He sat down to it.

It was hard upon ten o'clock when he awoke abruptly from an uneasy doze. What was it that he had forgotten? Why, of course! Mechanically, still half asleep, he wound the clock, setting it on the stained and battered bureau by the bed. Then fumblingly he undressed, groping sidewise for the pillow.

Upon the instant sleep drugged him with an insistent hand, pulling him down a long stairway of dreams into—nothingness.

CHAPTER THREE

AS a matter of fact, Lens-Eye Lindeman *had* been talking about Thane, but he had failed utterly to recognize in the cadaverous, hollow-cheeked traveler the immaculate, bearded, dignified individual who had been responsible for the quietus of old Peter Arbuthnot.

It was natural enough that Lindeman should have been present at the inquest; he had been a police court reporter before he had become a member of the "finest," and the coroner was a pretty good friend. The case was a trifle unusual. But the coroner would have turned in a verdict of accidental death had it not been for Lindeman.

For with what he had seen there in that chamber of the dead, plain as print before his eyes, he had been morally certain upon the instant that it had been no accident, no act of God indeed, but rather the act of a devil, premeditated, deliberate, with malice aforethought.

Lindeman knew Thane, but it seemed that he had not known him well enough. But where was he?

The detective was convinced that it was Thane who had caused Arbuthnot's demise by the selfsame reasoning which had told him that it had been murder and no accident. For, stooping to that blackened hearth, he had brought up, not any wisp of beard, no evidence to point to the removal of it, but something else, at sight of which his keen eyes had narrowed at the corners, his mouth a grim line beneath the straight sandy mustache. For it was the proof of a presence, and of a presence none other than that of Esmond Thane.

And that was why, with the drag-net out now at station and boat dock, Lindeman had stopped for a moment at the parcel counter. But it had not been the same clerk who had received the bag who had delivered it to the fugitive. The first man had been taken suddenly ill; at the hospital Lindeman drew blank with the information that the patient was delirious. But that had been following the detective's shadowing of the cadaverous stranger with the bag, and that had been done purely on a "hunch."

Lindeman had not been at all certain of the suspect, minus his beard; as a matter of fact he had been showing the parcels clerk a photograph of Thane which he had gotten from the office of the *Daily Meteor*. But he had observed two things which Thane had not, and it is extremely doubtful if the fugitive would have noticed more than one of them even with the aid of a mirror, crystal clear.

Acting on his hunch then, the detective had trailed the smooth-faced Thane to that water-front hotel, seen him go in, posted a

man in plain clothes on the opposite curb, the while he had visited the hospital. But even now he was not all certain that the tall, lean, smooth-faced stranger was the man whom he was after. And it would not do to blunder now, with time an object, even with that close-drawn cordon through which even now the murderer might have slipped forth to freedom.

Returning from the hospital, however, as the clocks were striking the half-hour before midnight, Lindeman, flashing his badge on the sleepy night clerk, ascended the narrow stair, leading upward to a black, glimmering well of darkness in which somewhere was the fugitive's room.

"Room Twelve," the night clerk had told him, "one flight up—down th' hall."

The detective had served an apprenticeship to danger which had tried and proved him. A coward is said to have something wrong with his heart; with Detective Lindeman that organ was just a muscle, at least so far as peril was concerned.

But he went upward now with caution, hand on the butt of his automatic, eyes strained against the velvet black, save where, at the stair-head, a single, low-voltage incandescent burned, dimly luminous, without reflection.

The man whom he sought, if it was indeed Esmond Thane, was dangerous, as an adder is dangerous; cornered in his hole, he would strike back as an adder strikes, ruthless and swift. The detective knew his man, or he thought that he did. Thane, his suspicions aroused, might be crouched, motionless, in the darkness, pistol leveled at the detective's heart.

At the stair-head, listening, holding his breath, the detective consulted the radium dial of his watch. It was eleven-fifty-five. Five minutes before midnight. Advancing now with the stealth and caution of an Indian, he drew his pocket flash, and the light danced, glimmering, upon floor and wall. And there before him was room Number 12.

Listening at the key-hole, the detective could hear the sound of breathing, stertorous and sodden, with the muffled ticking of a clock.

Noiselessly he tried the knob; the door was fast, the key was in the lock.

Well, and suppose, after all, that it was not Esmond Thane? Crouching in the darkness, the detective owned for a moment to a faint feeling of doubt. But with what he knew and what he suspected, it must be Thane. First of all, there was the evidence back there at Arbuthnot's; next, the two things that he had seen in the station; third——

Abruptly as he knelt there in the silence and the darkness there came a heavy, booming crash, another, the heavy, booming vibrations of the church bells on the corner. Midnight. A rolling echo followed it.

For perhaps ten seconds there was silence. Then from the room within he heard, clamorous upon the midnight air, the tocsin at twelve!

There was a window in the room, of course; the detective was taking no chances of his quarry's get-away. With his shoulder to the flimsy door it crashed inward. Lindeman following it, pistol in hand; in his other hand, rigid as a rock, the flashlight centred upon the bed and the man within it.

But Esmond Thane, turning upon his captor a face dazed with unbelief, eyes wide and staring, like a sleepwalker's, made no movement of resistance.

"You've—got me!" he muttered.

He arose heavily from the bed, turning his gray face to that of his nemesis.

"You've got me," he said again, almost with a stupid air. "But—but I don't understand, Lindeman. Well, I had it coming, I guess. And now——"

He began to dress slowly, stumblingly, as the detective spoke:

"I might as well tell you, Thane, now as later. You were clever, but you overlooked several little things. In the first place, I'd never have even thought of you if it hadn't been for your first slip; you *trade-marked* your presence there at Arbuthnot's; you even *dated* it. I can see just what you did, and why you overlooked it, too, for that matter."

He paused, gazing at his prisoner in a sort of wonder.

"You overlooked it, as I say, *after* you

were through shaving. No, I didn't know that at the time. You brought that early edition of the paper with you from the city room just as you had always done. It would not be on the stands for another half-hour. Arbuthnot couldn't have purchased one for an hour after that at the earliest. Well, you wrapped up your beard or what was left of it in that newspaper cleverly *and* mechanically, of course. Then you burned the paper, all but the top corner and the date line which I found, and so——"

He paused again, his eye, falcon-bright, upon the gray face of his prisoner.

"That made it fairly certain," he resumed, "that it was not an accident. Arbuthnot had drawn money from the bank, and you probably knew of it. But those two other things you never knew—and why you didn't notice *one* of them is beyond me—were simply these: You'd worn that beard for twenty years—ha? And you know, or you should have known, what a man's face looks like, close-shaven for the first time in twenty years. Yes, pale, Thane, with a regular prison pallor, but you'll not add to it *there*. And that other little thing? Why, that was just a little matter of deduction plus observation. Almost always the sign of the self-shaver is that irregular, ragged line just above the cheek-bone. You had that, Thane, and I noticed it. And that was why I followed you here."

His tone became brusque, decisive.

"And now we'll take a little walk. But with it all, Thane, I was not entirely sure of you until just now. You saw to that yourself last night, because habit was too strong for you. You wound that clock, you set the alarm for midnight, just as you've been in the habit of doing these past ten years. I knew of that habit of yours of course; it was the one thing that clinched it, made it certain, and it betrayed you!"

For Esmond Thane it had struck twelve in very truth.

JESSE POMEROY

IN the mid '70s of the last century the name of Jesse Pomeroy was on every lips as that of a boy fiend. At the age of 14 years he murdered two children and brutally tortured seven others. On December 21, 1871, a boy of 12 was inveigled to Powder Horn Hill, near Boston, and there stripped naked, tied to a beam and beaten with a rope until he became unconscious. Two months later another small child was similarly treated and in addition was hit across the face with a board, which broke his nose and knocked out some of his teeth. Five other children met with the same kind of treatment in nearby places. One of them after being stripped and beaten was stabbed with a knife about the head, another boy was stuck full of pins until he lost consciousness. Finally suspicion fell upon Pomeroy, he was tried, convicted and sentenced to the reform school until he came of age. Good behavior shortened the term to two years. In March, 1874, John Curran notified the police that his ten-year-old daughter was missing. Suspicion fell on a stranger who was said to have been seen with her. But nothing came of the search for the child. In April of the same year the body of a four-year-old child was found near a marsh. Thirty-two knife wounds were found on the body. Later Pomeroy was suspected and after his arrest confessed to the murder of the child. In July of the same year, the Pomeroys moved out of the house they occupied and the owner proceeded to deepen his cellar, and while men were doing the work they found the body of the little Curran girl. Pomeroy was convicted and sentenced to be hanged, but Gov. Gaston refused to sign the death warrant on account of the youth of the murderer. He was finally sentenced to solitary confinement for life. Several years ago he broke out of prison, but was recaptured. In 1917, after more than 40 years in solitary confinement, he was permitted to join the other prisoners in their work. He declined the privilege. During his solitary confinement he had read every book in the library, 4,000 in number, and had learned to read and write seven foreign languages. No word comes to the outside world concerning him these days.

The Missing Trick

By MICHAEL GROSS

NOON hour in the McNeil-Nelson Department Store is always a busy time, the "twelve o'clock specials" drawing shoppers from all parts of the city. Originated by old McNeil in an effort to fill the store early in the day, this idea of offering exceptional values between twelve and one had quickly proven a success. The bargains brought the crowds, but with the crowds came shoplifters, pickpockets, purse-snatchers and other nimble-fingered citizenry, who pilfered from shop and shopper with equal facility.

And it is because of the intrusion of such a highly undesirable element that we find, during the particular noon hour in which this story opens, Mr. Nelson himself, owner of the establishment, standing at the head of the main aisle. The same fact explains why Gruff Gordon, the shrewdest department store detective on the New York force, stood with him. The two men were engaged in an earnest conversation, but Gordon, in common with all detectives of long experience, had the knack of noting everything that went on around him without moving his head in the slightest. Suddenly he gave a start.

"That's funny," he said in the short staccato manner that had earned for him his nickname. "There's Kate Falcum, at the lace counter. Last I heard Kate was doing a stretch. Five years, I think it was. Wonder what's her game now?"

"Suppose we get nearer and try to find out," suggested Mr. Nelson, an apprehensive note immediately creeping into his voice.

The two men—one large, stout, full of dignity and suaveness; the other tall, lean, wiry and intensely observant—walked down the aisle to a point exactly opposite the lace counter. Here they paused and, to all appearances, resumed their conversation. But both of them kept their eyes fastened on the stylishly gowned, aristocratic-looking woman who was examining the rare and expensive merchandise a few feet away. She made her selections, piled the laces into a little heap and then said something to the sales person in charge. The girl jotted a note on a slip of paper, pressed it into a tube and dropped the tube through a chute under the counter. In a few moments it was returned. The girl glanced at the slip and shook her head. A heated argument, with the woman doing most of the talking, now followed. It ended with the girl tapping a bell by her side. The floor-walker, who arrived in answer to the signal, listened to the salesgirl's story. Then, evidently puzzled, he glanced around the store. His eyes suddenly rested on Mr. Nelson standing a few feet away. An audible sigh of relief came from his lips as he beckoned for the head of the store to come over. Mr. Nelson hurried across the aisle, Gruff Gordon walking leisurely after.

"This lady has just bought some laces," the floor-walker explained. "She must take them along, as she sails for Europe early to-morrow morning. Unfortunately ours happens to be one of the stores in which her husband has neglected to open a charge account. Of course, we can——"

"Oh, I've got an idea," the woman interrupted, glancing at the clock in the centre of the store. "It's just half-past twelve, and my husband is sure to be home. My car is outside, and I live across the Queensboro Bridge. Why can't one of your men come with me? My husband will give him a check on a bank right around our corner. He can have it certified and my chauffeur will drive him back to the store again."

The plan sounded feasible, and Mr. Nelson walked toward the telephone at the end

of the counter. Suddenly he caught a significant glance from the eyes of Gruff Gordon. Acting on the cue, he stepped back again. "Here's just the man I want," he said, pointing to the detective. "If you give him the check, everything will be all right."

The woman seemed well pleased at the prompt acceptance of her plan. She took up the package and made her way to the entrance of the store, Gruff Gordon following close behind.

The car that drove up to the curb was of an expensive make. A chauffeur, in trim uniform, stepped to the sidewalk, touched the brim of his cap, and then held the door open. The woman was about to enter when she paused and, turning to Gruff Gordon, said:

"I think it would be wise for me to telephone home first, so we can be sure my husband is there. Won't you excuse me for a moment? Step in and make yourself comfortable."

As though reading the detective's thoughts, she suddenly thrust the package of laces into his hand.

"And please put these into the car for me," she requested.

Gordon entered the automobile and sat down. Was this woman the notorious Kate Falcum, ran his mental questioning, or was he merely the victim of a striking resemblance. There was nothing dishonest about her actions thus far. And the car and chauffeur? Where would Kate Falcum obtain such an expensive outfit?

Further reflection on the subject was interrupted by the reappearance of the woman.

"He's home, all right," she announced, "and he'll have the check all made out by the time we get there."

The chauffeur closed the door, climbed into his seat, and with a low purr the car glided up the avenue. A few moments' drive and they were crossing the Queensboro Bridge. Another ten minutes along a broad highway, a short run up a private road and the car came to a stop in front of a three-story, ivy-covered building. Gordon stepped to the ground, then turned and helped his companion alight.

A flight of steps led to the entrance of the house, and the woman took the lead in ascending it. She pressed a button, and a maid admitted them. A passageway ran to the rear of the house, and Gordon, looking ahead over his companion's shoulder, noticed that it opened into a large, bare-looking chamber. Suddenly, and without a sound of warning, he was seized from behind and held in a powerful embrace. Almost instinctively Gordon set himself to throw off his assailant. With a powerful lunge of his shoulders he broke the grip that held him. Immediately a command rang out, and from a little chamber to the right three other men threw themselves upon the detective. In a flash his arms were pinioned to his sides, and a bag of some kind was thrust over his head. Gordon heard the swish of straps and buckles. "A strait-jacket," came the instant identification, followed by the thought that arrangements had evidently been made beforehand for this warm reception. Further struggle was useless, and Gordon allowed himself to be strapped into the contrivance.

The woman, in the meanwhile, had entered the room at the end of the passageway. There she was joined by a professional-looking man, and both stood in silence while their victim was being subdued. Two of Gruff Gordon's assailants, their work finished, now came around in front of him, and the detective noticed, with a perplexed glance, that both were dressed in blue uniforms and that the word "Attendant" appeared on their caps. He stared at the faces of the men intently, to the evident displeasure of one of them.

Gordon sensed the man's thought. "Excuse the stare," he said. "Just want to be able to identify you again." Then, in hopes that the name might have some effect on the subordinate, he added: "I'm Gordon, the detective."

The attendant laughed. "Detective, is it?" he said in a thick brogue. "Well, it's not me who's afraid. Sure and I'm the pope of Rome himself."

This remark caused a ripple of laughter to break out, in which the woman joined.

"Poor Jack," she said in a sympathetic

tone of voice, to the man standing beside her. "Whenever he gets one of these attacks he always imagines he's a detective. I do hope, doctor, you'll be able to do something for him."

"We'll try our best, Mrs. Adams. I've seen patients come here with worse hallucinations than being Sherlock Holmes and, a few months later, go out of that door perfectly sane."

"Oh, I do hope you'll cure Jack," the woman said fervently. "I'll telephone every hour to see how he is getting along. Can I send anything in for him?"

"Not a thing, Mrs. Adams. Just leave it all to us, and your husband will come through in fine shape."

Long before this stage of the conversation had been reached the solution to his predicament had dawned upon the detective. The woman was Kate Falcum, of that there was no doubt. And this trick did full credit to the tales Gordon had heard of her ingenuity. The telephone call, he now saw, was to notify the sanitarium that the husband of a Mrs. Adams had been seized with an attack of lunacy. Evidently Mr. Adams was described as violently insane. Hence the mobilization of the guards and the use of the strait-jacket at the first sign of fight.

"Good stuff," Gordon murmured to himself. "Darn good stuff."

He had trapped enough criminals in his thirty-odd years of service to appreciate it when one finally got back at him.

After a few more words of assurance by the doctor, and a promise by the pseudo Mrs. Adams that she would come in again the following morning, Kate Falcum walked to the door and was let out by the maid.

No sooner had she gone than the doctor walked over to Gordon, felt his pulse and then listened to his heart. Gordon did not say a word. If he was not mistaken about the manner in which insane patients were received for treatment, his moment would soon come. Kate Falcum might be a very clever woman, but she had missed one trick. And in Gruff Gordon's business to miss one trick usually meant to lose the game.

The examination over, the doctor beckoned to one of the guards.

"This fellow is all right now," he said. "Take off the jacket."

The guard obeyed.

Gruff Gordon, freed from its confining embrace, waited anxiously for the doctor's next command. And, as if the detective himself had given the cue, the welcome words came:

"Now search him!"

That was the order Gordon wanted and the one that Kate Falcum had failed to anticipate. No patient presumed to be violently insane would be allowed to go unbound for even a moment without first having been searched and everything taken away that might prove harmful to himself or others.

The guard emptied Gordon's trouser pockets. Then he thrust his hand into the inside coat pocket and took out a leather wallet.

"Hand that to the doctor," Gordon commanded.

The guard, taken by surprise at the peremptory order, obeyed.

"Look through it," Gordon went on, now addressing the doctor. "Then let's talk."

The doctor no doubt felt it would be best to humor his patient. He opened the wallet and examined its contents. To judge by the expression that gradually came over his face, the medico was evidently getting the surprise of his life.

"I don't understand this at all," he finally murmured in dire perplexity, holding out an oblong card. "You're certainly the same man whose photograph appears on this police pass, but the name is different."

A few words of explanation quickly followed, and then Gordon was led to a telephone, where he called up Mr. Nelson and asked that a car be sent for him immediately. By the time it arrived the doctor knew all of the circumstaces surrounding the visit of the pseudo Mrs. Adams. Also he had pledged his aid in the carrying out of a little scheme that would once more bring the soft-hearted lady face to face with her violently insane husband.

"Yes, she certainly put it over. Workmanlike and neat," Gordon confessed as he faced Mr. Nelson about an hour later. "I fell for it like a ton of anvils."

"Two thousand dollars' worth of laces fell with you," Mr. Nelson reminded the detective.

"We'll both bounce back," came Gordon's assurance. "Wait a day or two. Our inning's just starting."

The next night Gruff Gordon, to follow out his own simile, came to bat. But no one who saw the disreputable figure that slouched into Gulver's a little after eight o'clock would have recognized the famous detective.

Presumably a tailor shop during the day, Gulver's place was really one of the best-known "fences" in the underworld. Old man Gulver handled only precious commodities. Diamonds, gold, silks—all found their way to the little room in back of the dingy store and out again into the hands of those who would pay the price. And so shrewdly were the transactions negotiated that the police had never been able to fasten anything on the old man that he could not wriggle out of.

Gordon picked his way through the dimly lit store and knocked on a panel of the rear partition. A slide moved back, disclosing a square opening. Then a pair of eyes under shaggy brows peered out.

"Who is it?" came the question.

"Pete Sabato sent me here," Gordon answered.

"And who the deuce are you?" the voice questioned further.

"I'm Pete's brother."

"What d'ye want?"

"Pete says is anything new? He's got a feller wants a lot of stuff. Laces especially. Pay a good price, too."

"Haven't got a thing," came the definite answer. "Only sparklers, and Pete can't handle them."

Gruff Gordon well knew that Pete, just at that moment, could handle neither sparklers nor anything else, for he had succeeded in placing that worthy behind prison bars only the week before. But this loss of one of his best customers had evidently not as yet reached Gulver's ears.

"All right," Gordon said briefly, and started away. He walked out of the store and a few moments later saw him in front of another ramshackle building near the East River. A battered sign, on which the words "Lunch Room" could be barely deciphered, squeaked dismally over a dirty show window. Gordon pushed open the door, slouched in and seated himself at one of the tables. The place appeared deserted, but after a short wait a frousled-looking waiter in a dirty apron approached the detective.

"What'll it be?" he asked.

"Mother Jinny in?" Gordon whispered, with a nod of his head toward the rear of the store.

The man nodded.

"Tell her Pete wants to see her."

"Pete who?"

"She'll know. Just say Pete."

The man walked through a door at the end of the room. Soon he reappeared, and beckoned the detective to come over.

Gordon walked through and came face to face with Mother Jinny, a dealer in stolen property, only a little less able than old Gulver himself. Mother Jinny stared at Gordon for a long moment. Then she grabbed his arm.

"You're not Pete!" she snarled.

"Stow the noise! I'm Pete's brother. Pete couldn't get away. He's got a fellow wants some laces. Good money, and the stuff goes to Europe to-morrow. Whatcher got?"

Mother Jinny relinquished her grasp, and stood in thought for a moment.

"I can fix him up with just what he wants," she finally said. "You couldn't have come at a better time. But you'll have to wait until to-morrow."

"Can't do it. The feller's taking the boat in the morning. Can't you get the stuff to-night?"

"I'll try," Mother Jinny promised. "Get back here in an hour with six hundred bucks and I'll see what I can do for you."

Gordon felt a thrill of triumph at the words. The scheme he had entered into

with the doctor at the sanatorium was beginning to work already.

"I'll be back with the roll at ten," he promised, and went out. On the corner he took up a position behind a billboard and waited, his eyes glued to the store entrance. A few moments passed. Then a girl came down the steps leading from the house. Gordon allowed her to get about thirty feet ahead before he stepped out and followed her. The girl walked across to Broadway, then up that thoroughfare until she came to the Staunton Hotel.

In his underworld habiliment Gordon did not dare enter the hostelry. Instead he ducked into the shadow of a parked taxi at the curb, from which position he could watch everything that went on in the brilliantly lit hotel lobby.

The girl approached the desk and said something to the clerk. She was evidently told to wait, for she walked over to one of the chairs and sat down. Five minutes elapsed. Then Gruff Gordon gave a low chuckle of delight. Kate Falcum, resplendent in a low-cut evening gown and carrying a small parcel in her hand, was coming down the broad stairway that led to the lobby. The girl stared curiously at the richly gowned woman, but made no attempt to rise and greet her.

"Doesn't know her," Gordon reflected. "Point one in the kid's favor."

It was not until Kate Falcum had stepped to within a few feet of the girl and murmured something that the messenger gave any sign of recognition. Then she passed over an envelope and was handed the package.

Kate Falcum passed on into the main dining-room. The girl made her way out of the hotel and Gordon swung in behind her as she passed him. In a quiet street just off Madison avenue he stepped up and touched the messenger on the shoulder. The girl gave a start, and then turned a blanched face toward the detective.

"Don't be frightened," Gordon said. "Walk right over to that policeman," he added reassuringly. "The one on the corner. I'll talk to you in front of him."

It seemed to be a safe thing to do, and the girl immediately obeyed. She approached the officer, and as she drew close Gordon stepped in advance of her.

"Hello, McQuade," he greeted the uniformed figure.

The policeman stared for a moment. Then, with a quick salute, he said: "Well, Mr. Gordon, I was just making up my mind as you passed whether I'd take the trouble to run you in as a vag or let you be."

Gordon smiled. "I scared the wits out of the youngster here. Tell her who I am, Mac."

The officer turned to the girl, who had paused a few feet away.

"It's all right, ma'am," he said. "This man is a store detective—one of the best, too, though it's not me who should be saying it in front of the man."

The girl, her fright over with, quietly answered the questions Gordon put to her. As he had surmised, she knew nothing at all as to the nature of her errand. She had taken a servant's position in Mother Jinny's house only a few days before. Right after supper Mrs. Clebold, as the girl knew her mistress, had told her to go to the Staunton, ask for Mrs. Notting and bring back the package she would receive.

In a few words Gordon explained the method by which Mother Jinny was able to keep servants on the proceeds of a basement lunch-room. Then he brought the package under the rays of the lamp-post and opened it.

"This is only part of the haul," Gordon told the girl as he counted the pieces. "We've got to get the rest." Then, as a sudden thought struck him, he added: "Want to help me?"

The girl slowly nodded her head. She could not have been more than seventeen, but long hours of hard work had written their cruel story on her face and form. The blue eyes, though full of intelligence, had a weary, half-awake appearance; the cheeks were wan and sunken. But a sweet expression lit up the girl's countenance, and she carried herself proudly and with grace.

"Good food and a long rest. That's all the poor tiker needs," Gordon mused to himself.

He explained carefully what his new-found assistant was to do.

"Go back to Mrs. Clebold. Say Mrs. Notting was out. Expected later. Then see what happens. If you're sent out again come to this corner. Wait here with McQuade for me."

The girl left her package in the detective's care and started back.

Promptly at ten o'clock Gordon was in the dingy lunch-room once more. He listened to Mother Jinny's excuse for not having the laces ready, as though he only half-believed her story.

"That's just wind," he finally said in well-assumed impatience. "We've got this guy all sewed up. Now you fall down on us. And the bird leaves for Europe in the morning, too."

"Well, I'll try again to-night if you want me to," Mother Jinny offered.

"Course I want you to. Think I'm making these trips here for me health?"

"All right; stick around for an hour or so, and then come in."

Gordon went out, caught a cross-town car, and in a few minutes was back in his rooms on Irving Place. He hurriedly pulled on some good clothes and then started back to Officer McQuade's post. There he found the girl waiting for him.

"Go into the Staunton and ask for Mrs. Notting again," Gordon instructed her. "When she comes down give her this note. She'll go to her room, no doubt. Let her. Finally you'll get another package. Take it and hand over this envelope. I'll be there to do the rest."

The girl carried out her instructions to the letter. As Gordon had foreseen, Mrs. Notting went back to her room, for the note purporting to come from Mother Jinny contained the news that the man who bought the first package of laces wanted more. While she was upstairs Gordon walked into the hotel and stepped behind a telephone booth. In a few moments Mrs. Notting, as she no doubt preferred to be called, came down the steps again. She handed the messenger a package. No sooner had she accepted the envelope the girl gave her in return than Gordon came walking towards the pair.

"Game as they make 'em," the detective was forced to concede, as he saw Kate Falcum turn pale, bite her lower lip and then quickly regain her composure.

"Hello, Jack, dear," she said, with not the slightest trace of fear in her voice. "I see the doctor was as good as his word. You don't look at all insane now."

Gordon smiled. "Sorry, Miss Falcum," he said. "But you'll have to come along."

Kate Falcum was lodged in the local station house on a charge of larceny preferred by Gruff Gordon. After this was accomplished he handed the package of laces to the girl and told her to take them to Mother Jinny.

"Don't get frightened if there's some excitement soon after," he warned her. "And be sure to come to McNeil-Nelson's at ten to-morrow morning. I'll have something for you."

The girl proceeded on her way, while Gordon hustled back to his rooms and changed into the shabby outfit once more.

"Getting to be a regular actor," he smiled to himself as he pulled on the ragged trousers. "Three turns a day. Might be wise to hire a valet."

At eleven o'clock he stepped into the unsavory eating place for the last time. Mother Jinny had the laces all ready, and Gordon handed her in exchange for the package a roll of marked bills. Then, the transaction over, he flashed his badge, and the old lady, shrewd enough to know when she was cornered, and too wise to make an outcry, went along without a word.

"Well, the bounce back was certainly a grand success," beamed Mr. Nelson as he sat at his desk and lovingly fingered the package of old laces that Gruff Gordon had handed to him. "You did a great piece of work, my boy, even though the start was bad."

"Here's what did the work," the detective smiled. "That and my little assistant."

He brought out his wallet, searched in it for a moment, and then handed across a folded newspaper clipping.

Mr. Nelson opened the fragment and read aloud:

"PERSONAL—Will Mrs. Adams, who brought her husband to the Cartwright Sanatorium yesterday afternoon, please call immediately? Mr. Adams died of heart failure soon after being admitted."

"That notice appeared in the local papers the next morning," Gordon explained. "Doctor Cartwright had it done. I knew it would reach Kate. She would want to know how her trick went over. Also how soon I got out and what the store was doing. The newspapers would give her all the information."

"And it worked out just that way, I suppose?" Mr. Nelson ventured.

"Exactly," Gordon went on. "Kate saw the death notice and got panic-stricken. It was the unexpected and rattled her. She figured the body would be identified. An investigation would be started. To dispose of the loot quickly became her one thought. Only two people hereabouts handled laces. Mother Jinny and Gulver. Stuff wasn't at one place, so I went to the other."

"And there it was, too," Mr. Nelson added exultantly.

"Had to be," said Gordon. "Mother Jinny made Kate an offer before I got there. Kate refused it. Then I came along. Clamored to buy laces. Mother Jinny saw a chance to make a quick profit. She raised her bid. Kate fell for it."

"And found, when she landed," Mr. Nelson observed, "that it's not such smooth going when one begins to wander off the straight and narrow, eh, Gordon?"

"Yes," came the answer. "But do you know when Kate really began to slip? The moment that guard started going through my pockets."

—— Read ——
"THE MYSTERY MAN"
By Joe Burke
An Exciting Serial—It Ends in Our Next Number

"MATINEE BURGLAR" IN JOVIAL MOOD

THOMAS F. BELFORD, self-confessed "matinee burglar," recently piloted the police to six apartments where he said he had perpetrated daylight thefts. The list follows:

Apartment of Dr. George A. Riker, fourth floor of No. 21 East 47th street, where two pairs of diamond-set cuff links and a monogramed gold watch vanished Dec. 7.

Apartment of S. H. McSherry, broker, third floor of No. 21 East 47th street, where $50 in cash and a silver wrist watch were stolen Dec. 8. Belford was wearing the watch when arrested, the police say.

Apartment of Alvin Buchanan, No. 31 West 50th street, where a scarfpin set with diamonds, gold bar pin, silverware and cash disappeared Nov. 7.

Apartment of Viola Shaw, author, No. 25 West 50th street, where three diamond rings, scarfpin and jade beads, all valued at $1,500, were taken Dec. 15.

Apartment formerly occupied by Mrs. M. G. Worthington, No. 128 East 51th street, where old gold jewelry vanished early in December.

Apartment formerly occupied by Lou Tellegen, actor, No. 12 East 57th street, now in possession of Peggy Joyce, actress, which Belford said he had robbed, but could not remember the date.

Belford's description of the burglaries agreed with complaints made to the police, detectives said.

Throughout the trip, made by automobile with officers of the West 110th street station, Belford was in a jovial mood. His gray kid gloves attracted the attention of the police, and Belford remarked that they formed a part of his "working equipment. A jimmy was his only burglar tool.

The CREASED CHECK

by CARL H. GETZ

ON this particular day he called himself Clinton Filbert. To the police every day he was simply "Sly" Williams, one of the cleverest forgerers and hand-writing experts that ever raised or altered a check. As the porter in the barber shop brushed him he looked himself over. He was immensely pleased with himself from his light-gray, soft, felt hat, his newly cut hair, his shaved and massaged face to his polished boots.

"I'm a gentleman," he thought to himself as he tipped the porter, the bootblack, the barber and the manicurist. And then, as he turned to the cashier, he asked:

"Will you kindly direct me to the Old National Bank?"

"Yes, sir," said the barber, as if honored to serve such a distinguished-looking gentleman. "One block to your left and two to your right," and he pointed which way to go.

"Thank you," said "Sly" as he took another look at himself in the mirror. He saw that his dark-blue serge suit was freshly pressed, that his shirt was white and that his cuffs showed just enough, that his tie was a rich blue and that for a stick-pin he wore a solitary pearl. He looked at his shoes and saw that they were black and well-polished and that his hose were black, too.

"Saturday morning and eleven o'clock," he thought to himself. "This is when I go to work."

He adjusted his tie and picked a bit of lint off the lapel of his coat.

"Now I am perfect," he thought. And then aloud: "Well, good-morning."

Work stopped in the shop as all the barbers looked up to speak to him.

"Sly" walked slowly down the street, and it pleased him the way the people, men and women alike, stared at him. He knew that his skin was clear and that his color was good. He knew that his eyes were bright and his step firm.

"Why shouldn't they watch me?" asked "Sly" of himself.

He wandered on, and in a minute was walking into the Old National Bank. A glance over the room took in the entire surroundings.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said to a guard, "but isn't that second gentleman at the desk there Mr. Morgan?" and he pointed to a circular fixture in the centre of the room where a number of men were arranging their deposits and writing checks to be cashed.

"No, sir," said the guard, "that's Mr. Thomas, editor of the *Star.*"

"Why, to be sure," said "Sly." "My eyes aren't as good as they used to be. It takes young fellows like you to see. We who are old and feeble can't observe everything."

The guard removed his cap to show his snow-white hair.

"We young fellows," he laughed heartily as he rubbed his head.

"Oh, you can't fool me," said the crook. "I can tell from the twinkle of your eye that you're just a young fellow."

And both of them laughed merrily, as if they enjoyed the joke immensely.

"Sly" walked over to the desk where Mr. Thomas was writing, picked up a deposit slip, wrote the date and his name, and then turning to the editor, he said:

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Thomas. You don't know me, but of course I am not acquainted with you, just as every other person in our city knows you. I am taking the liberty of speaking without having been formally introduced, because I want to take advantage of this opportunity to congratulate you upon the splendid newspaper you are publishing."

Mr. Thomas glanced up the moment his name was spoken, and while "Sly" was talking he studied him from head to foot, until he seemed to be satisfied.

"Thank you very much, Mr.—Mr.——" said Mr. Thomas.

"Gilbert is my name," answered "Sly." "Clinton Gilbert."

"What is there about our paper that you like particularly, Mr. Gilbert?" asked the editor.

"It is hard to say," said the crook, "because I like the entire paper. To begin with, there is a judicious selection of news. You produce a well-balanced paper, I think. Then I like your editorials. They reveal scholarly thinking and profound understanding. I like your features. Really, Mr. Thomas, I like your whole paper."

While he was talking Mr. Thomas started to try to write with one of the bank pens. He was having difficulty.

"Is there anything more annoying than a bad pen?" asked "Sly" as he handed Mr. Thomas another. "Try that one." He held out a piece of paper on which Mr. Thomas could write.

The latter tried the pen and wrote: "Gordon R. Thomas."

"This is fine," said Mr. Thomas. "Thank you very much."

"You are very welcome, I am sure," said "Sly" as he crumpled up the paper on which Mr. Thomas had just written his name, and he did it in just such a way that Mr. Thomas thought he knew what 'Gilbert' was doing. What he didn't know, however, was that when "Sly" made a motion to throw the paper into the waste basket, nothing really went into it. The paper remained safely palmed in "Sly's" hand.

The crook began feeling through his pockets.

"I am in an embarrassing predicament," he said. "I came here to cash a check, and now I find that I haven't a blank one with me. And look at those two lines. I am not keen about standing in line for a bank check only to have to take my turn again to have it cashed."

"I can help you out, Mr. Gilbert," said Mr. Thomas, and he pulled out his wallet, and handed the crook not one, but two blank checks.

"Oh, thank you so much," said "Sly." "That's mighty good of you."

"Not at all," answered the editor as he picked up his own checks and walked towards the receiving teller's window. When he turned away he raised his hand to "Sly," who returned the greeting.

The minute Mr. Thomas was away the crook started to work fast. He spread out the palmed paper before him, and he took just one good look at Mr. Thomas's signature, then hid it away in his pocket. He had that amazing faculty of being able to remember every little detail about a signature. He noticed that Mr. Thomas made a peculiar G, and he noticed, too, that instead of a period after his initial R, he wrote a little cross, such as newspaper copy readers use for a period mark. Then he observed other details, and took one of the blank checks out of his pocket and proceeded to make out a check for $500, payable

to himself, and signed by Gordon R. Thomas.

The editor had gone to the receiving teller's window, and was about tenth in line. "Sly" started for the paying teller, walked to the head of the line of about nine people, and then turned to them, bowed and said half interrogatively:

"I wonder whether you folks would be good enough to allow me to cash a check without waiting in line? I have to catch a train in a few minutes."

Men and women alike smiled at him, and several bowed assent.

"Thank you so much," said the crook with one of his best smiles. Those in line felt amply repaid after having had that grateful acknowledgment bestowed upon them.

"I beg your pardon," said "Sly" to the teller, "but these people have graciously consented to allow me to cash this check without waiting in line."

And he pushed the check toward the teller.

"Why, I am sorry, sir," said the latter, "but I don't know you. Have you an account here? Can some one identify you?"

"Why, I am a friend of Mr. Thomas," said "Sly" coolly. "Didn't you see me talking to him a minute ago? He and I are going with our families to Portland this afternoon, and he asked me to draw money, buy all the tickets and make other necessary arrangements. We leave in just a little while and will have to hurry on ahead to the station. Mr. Thomas is in the bank now. If you will look, you will see him over there in line at the receiving teller's window."

The teller got up on his toes and looked. Sure enough, there was Mr. Thomas.

"How do you want this, Mr. Gilbert?" asked the teller.

"In fifties," answered "Sly."

The moment the teller paid the money he was in doubt. He again got up on his tiptoes to watch Mr. Gilbert. The crook walked to the receiving teller's line, stopped and spoke to Mr. Thomas and then walked out.

"He knows Mr. Thomas," muttered the teller, very much relieved. "It's all right now. But, jingo, I was scared for a moment."

"It's the work of 'Sly' Williams," said Detective Brad Northrup of New York that night as he sat in the office of the chief of police of Seattle. "I have been trailing Williams seventeen months, and every now and then I get this close to him. But I have never been able to catch him. I know just how he works his crooked games."

"Well," said the chief, "I'm sorry he was here."

"I trailed him to Indianapolis, then to Minneapolis, and then to Fargo," Brad went on. "I figured he was coming on to the Coast, so I jumped ahead to this place."

"I see," nodded the chief.

"This is the fifteenth of the month. If the paying teller had not gotten suspicious late this afternoon and telephoned Mr. Thomas, we would not have known about this forgery until the bank had returned Mr. Thomas's vouchers to him, which would have been in more than two weeks. In that space of time he could have been far away.

"Williams is one of the most brilliant crooks I have ever known. His father was a gambler, his mother an actress. His folks had money, and he was given a college education. The fellow is handsome, an immaculate dresser and an engaging conversationalist. In addition he is most polite and courteous, and possesses rare skill in ingratiating himself wherever he goes. In all the years that I have been hunting criminals I have never known one equal to him.

"Williams has served two terms, one in Joliet for two years and one in Sing Sing for three years. He has been guilty of dozens of crimes, and has been arrested a good many times; but it has been next to impossible to obtain a conviction against him, because the evidence obtained was rarely conclusive.

"He works back and forth across this country, usually cashing checks for $500, and so far has managed to keep one jump ahead of me. But one of these days I'll outguess him, and once we get him he will spend the rest of his days behind steel bars."

"I hope you'll succeed," the chief answered grimly.

"In the old days of liquor," the detective went on, "it would have been much easier to catch Williams. Then he probably might have got drunk and talked, and we would have nabbed him. To-day he doesn't drink, because he is afraid of the stuff. Result is he keeps sober, and that makes my work all the harder. People don't know how much more difficult prohibition has made the work of detectives. I have been trailing forgers all my life, and, believe me, it is one tough job. Why, do you know that the forgers and alterers all over the country have stolen not less than $50,000,000 last year? And we detectives are expected to get these men."

"What do you propose to do?" asked the chief as the detective paused.

"I am not sure," answered Northrup. "Williams has one weakness which I think will result in his capture. He has three different methods of obtaining money under false pretences, and follows those methods in regular order. He is now due to work what we call the creased check trick. We'll get 'Sly' eventually. He'll slip up one of these days. They all do."

"Where do you think you'll go to locate him?" inquired the chief.

"Where do you think I ought to look?" asked the detective.

"It is hard to tell," the chief answered. "There are towns north of us, Everett, Bellingham, Vancouver and Victoria. Then there is Tacoma quite near and Portland in Oregon. Going east, Spokane is the only city of any size."

"How large is Tacoma?" asked Northrup.

"About 115,000 inhabitants," the chief replied.

"I think I'll go to Tacoma," said Northrup. "You say I can get there in about two hours. Would you mind getting the Tacoma chief of police on the wire?"

Within three and one-half hours Northrup had telephoned the chief of police of Tacoma, returned to his hotel, packed his bags and checked out and made the pleasant S und trip. Soon after his arrival he was telling the chief of police of Tacoma about "Sly" Williams.

"I have an idea he will come here next," said Northrup. "I may be wrong, for I am simply guessing."

The next morning all of the banks in the city received a communication from the police department about the crook. They were warned particularly to watch for a man who tallied with the description of Williams that was given, especially if he offered a check creased in a peculiar way, at an angle from top to bottom. The banks were instructed that Detective Northrup would make his headquarters at the National Bank of Commerce during banking hours, and that he was to be notified in case "Mr. Gilbert" or any one answering his description presented a check for payment.

"I don't think "Sly" will attempt anything to-day, but I won't take a chance," said Northrup as he started for the bank early the next morning.

The same day, immaculately dressed as usual, "Sly" Williams stepped up to the desk of the manager of the Metropolitan Hotel in Tacoma as the latter was writing a check.

"Would you be so good as to direct me to a good bank?" he asked. "I am a stranger here, and wish to open an account."

"Why, I deposit at the Fidelity," said the manager. "I think you will find that a good bank."

"Sly" took care to note that the manager's name was Anthony L. P. Simon. He saw it on a little bronze desk stand.

"Thank you very much," said the crook. With that he walked away. At 10 o'clock he presented himself at a window of the Fidelity Bank:

"Mr. Anthony L. P. Simon," said "Sly," "sent me over for a book of blank checks."

A check book was given to him.

Half an hour later "Sly" was back at Mr. Simon's desk. He explained that he had been accommodated at the Fidelity Bank. In his hand he had a loose-leaf, leather-covered, gilt-edge book.

"If I may, I would like to show you a very remarkable book," said "Sly." He

opened and spread a small book before Mr. Simon. "I have traveled all over the world, and in this book I have signatures of the managers of the most famous hotels of the world."

Mr. Simon was interested and began to look through the book.

"Why, there is my old friend, Walter Sinton, who used to work with me at the La-Salle in Chicago," he said. "And here is my pal, Ray McClurg, who used to be at the Ritz in Philadelphia."

When Mr. Simon had about finished "Sly" took a fountain pen from his pocket, unscrewed it, and as he handed it to Mr. Simon he said:

"Mr. Simon, I have been treated so kindly here that I want your signature, too."

"With pleasure," said Mr. Simon as he added his name.

A few minutes later the crook was in his room studying Mr. Simon's signature. It was an exact fac-simile of the signature "Sly" saw him append to the check he had been writing. He turned it upside-down, copied it twice and compared his own with the original. The two could not be told apart. He then took out his new check book and wrote a check for $500 payable to himself—to-day known as Walker R. Wright—and signed it Anthony L. P. Simon.

That afternoon "Sly" studied the time-table. He packed his bags, checked out and took a taxi to the Union Station. There he checked his baggage and then took another taxi back to the hotel. Looking at his watch, he saw that he had just forty-five minutes before a train would leave for Portland. Ten minutes later he presented himself at the paying teller's window in the Fidelity Bank with his bogus check.

"I am sorry," said the teller, "but I don't know you."

"Of course you don't," answered "Sly." "I am so sorry. I told Mr. Simon he ought to come with me, but he said he was going to be in conference at this hour and simply could not get away. What am I going to do? I wonder whether I could take this check back to the hotel and have Mr. Simon O. K. it."

"Why, of course," said the teller. "Just have him endorse the check and write 'Signature O.K.'"

The crook stepped into a cigar store a few doors away, folded the check in such a way that he could trace on the back as an endorsement, direct from the original signature on the face side. In doing so he creased the check.

Ten minutes later "Sly" was back at the window.

"Here you are," he said, pushing in the check.

The check was creased!

The teller pushed a button beneath his counter, and then turning to the crook, he said:

"You will have to excuse me a moment. I will have to see whether Mr. Simon has this much on deposit."

Northrup received his signal, and almost ran to the Fidelity from the National Bank of Commerce. It was a short distance. He entered by the main entrance, spoke to both of the guards, told him who he was, and then instructed them not to allow any one to leave the room until he said so. Then he went over to the other door and gave the same instructions to the two guards there. Next he looked down the big hall. There at the second window stood "Sly."

Detective Northrup pulled his hat firmly on his head and walked in the direction of where the crook was standing. "Sly" happened to turn, saw the detective and then made a running dive for the door.

He might as well have tried to go head first through the Chinese Wall.

"I wrote my friends that I was going to spend a short vacation on the Hudson," said "Sly" to his pal in Sing Sing two months later. "But now I find that one does not get a very good view of the Hudson from here. It is most disappointing."

"Yes, it is," said his pal. "I can't see through concrete, either."

—— Read ——
THE SPLENDID DETECTIVE SKETCHES
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Tramps On the Railroad

WHILE trainmen are of one mind in regard to the annoyance which tramps cause the railroad companies, they disagree about the methods of these individuals in "doing" the country. In spite of the strict rule of all railroads prohibiting tramps, these professional travelers get over the road somehow or other with astonishing rapidity. They have been known to come from San Francisco to New York in record-breaking trips. Tramps are partial to mail trains. The trucks are roomier than those of the ordinary coach or freight car.

There are tramps and tramps. Many a poor fellow who has spent his last cent and is out at the elbows wants to try his luck in another part of the country, but he has no means of getting there except his heels. These will not carry him far without hunger staring him in the face. He slinks about some freight yard, and when a train is pulling out begs a trainman to carry him along a bit. He admits that he is a tramp, but he isn't; he's a beggar and a tenderfoot. There are others, who have just got their hand in, traveling from town to town, and when a trainman catches them stowed away in a box car they whine piteously and recount their sufferings or those of a sick family miles away which they are anxious to get to.

"These are no tramps," said a brakeman. "There is nothing interesting about them, and they are a nuisance. The professional tramp is a character, and sometimes you meet with one so slick that he deserves to beat his way. The real tramp makes no excuse when he is discovered. Nine times out of ten he makes a threat, and as a good many of them go armed it is dangerous to meddle with them. For if there is a human being who might be expected to value his life cheaply it is a tramp rather than a burglar. How many times have I had a tramp snarl at me with a string of oaths and wind up by threatening to put a hole through me!"

"Probably tramps will hang on to most anything, from the brake-shoe to the wheel box," suggested the writer.

"No," said a trainman of the Central Railroad of New Jersey. "Many people have erroneous ideas about the habits of tramps. Personally I never saw a tramp on a truck, but others say that they have. Tramps generally pull for an empty box car, if there is one open. It is curious to see them search the yard over, inquire about the departure of trains and their destination and the stops they make along the way. Why, one Saturday night, just before leaving for Phillipsburg, I went to search my train for tramps, and I found an empty Fall Brook car full of them, right next to the train shed. They knew somehow that the car was going home, and that it went to the end of the journey. They always seem to want to go as far as possible.

"These fellows set up a whining and begged me to let them go along. They all had sick families, or something just as bad, to go for, and one of them said he wanted to go to Phillipsburg to attend the funeral of his brother. I drove them all out. None of them was a professional. They didn't know one another, and they all scattered in different directions.

"Of course they will get into any car that is left open, and if there is anything eatable they always help themselves. If there isn't an open car they will try to find a car of lumber. That is more exposed, but there are always some vacant nooks between the piles of boards, and they make very good bunks. One summer, when I was running on a Long Branch train, we had an experience with tramps at Matawan. We picked up a car of lumber there. A gang of tramps had learned of its time of departure and that it was a through car, which just suited them. They always try to get a 'through

sleeper,' like passengers who pay their way. One of them, who had a wooden leg, they put on top of the lumber in plain sight, and then they appeared to go away. Of course the trainmen wouldn't put a deformed man off, and apparently he was the only one who was going along. But no sooner did the locomotive signal to start than the gang lit upon the lumber car like a swarm of bees. We went back and pulled them all out from the crevices, and we got curses in return.

"The next night, when a freight train came along, the switch at Matawan was open, and the train smashed a lot of cars on a siding. The tramps were around later to see the results, and they asked the agent whether that was Porter's train. 'No,' said the agent, and they were very sorry that they had made a mistake.

"An empty box-car or car of lumber lacking, they look for a car with a good sill at the end. But not many cars are built that way now. Where a car has ladders within reach of the bumpers tramps will stand on the bumpers and make a long journey sometimes in that position. But generally there is nothing to cling to at the end, and many a professional will stand between two cars with a foot on one bumper and the other foot on the other bumper. Of course, this is reckless, for trains often break in two, and down goes the tramp and one section goes over him. Probably more tramps are killed in this way than any other. Sometimes a tramp is drunk and tumbles off from his perch when the train is going around a curve."

"Suppose you catch a lot of tramps aboard after the train is under way?"

"Do you think that we pitch them off? Well, no, for several reasons. If they should get killed we should be criminally responsible. Besides, the tramp might not be the one to be pitched off. A couple of burly fellows will sometimes make it lively for a brakeman, or the whole crew, for that matter. On a Delaware and Hudson coal train, several years ago, Conductor Billy Gerry undertook to get a couple of tramps off while the train was going at fifteen miles an hour or more. They were perched upon a load of coal when he tackled them. They tossed him off head first and then dropped a big chunk of coal onto his head. He was in the hospital for a long time. The tramps went to the penitentiary.

"No, I generally leave tramps alone until the first stop. If the train is moving slowly I sometimes throw their hats off. That works every time. They wouldn't lose that for anything. They always get off for it. But you have to catch them on the sly. They always carry their pockets full of stones for ammunition, and the chances are that they will stone you after they get off. This is a common trick of tramps, and they often lie in wait until the train returns to get revenge. The worst place to get the tramps down on you is the mining regions. Old conductors say they sometimes had to call out the police of the mining companies in order to suppress them.

"Tramps around New York are not so dangerous, but they are just as common. The roads between New York and Philadelphia are a great runway for them. Several years ago the Pennsylvania and Jersey Central companies combined to get rid of them. They had a large force of men to run them down and arrest every one they caught. It worked for a time, but they got thick again.

"Where do tramps go to? You tell me. I never found a person who knew. You can't believe half of what they tell you. As I say, the professionals keep their mouths shut. Probably they go the round of the cities, staying in each one until their credit gives out, so to speak. Do they work in the country during the summer? That is a nice profession for a tramp to make, but I guess you never found any one who believed it. I never found a cent of money on the body of a tramp killed on the road—usually not much clothing, either. Tramps go through the country a good deal during the summer and intimidate women at the farm houses while the men are at work. They get a good deal in this way. They don't travel much during the winter, though. They flock to the cities. I have found them walking along the tracks sometimes when it was too cold to ride, but this is against the principles of the professional.

He regulates his travels according to the seasons."

Said a Pennsylvania conductor, "I have found tramps in more odd positions on a freight train than you would imagine ever existed. But, for that matter, I have seen them hid away in the wooden vestibules of a mail train. That is fast traveling, but not comfortable, for they must stand bolt upright without moving or they will be detected. You know how many trainmen take pity on a well-meaning fellow and let him through, even in the coaches. They crawl in between two seats with the backs reversed. These are not generally professionals. But on freight cars I have often found them stowed away in a big water main on top of a flat car. You may find a dozen tramps in a car load of mains. Tramps can't very well ride on the trucks of freight cars; they would get thrown off coming around a sharp curve. But express and baggage car trucks allow room enough to get a good hold.

"Still, I have found them riding underneath freight cars in what would seem to be more perilous places than on the trucks. Many of the larger cars have long connecting rods reaching from one truck to the other, underneath, to brace the car up under the heavy weight. Sometimes there are three or four of these rods, a foot or so apart and parallel. They are stretched over a bridge six or eight inches high, like the strings over the bridge of a fiddle. There is plenty of room for Mr. Tramp to lie in between, and if he happens to have a small board along he can travel very comfortably, as I have frequently seen them.

"Tramps are a necessary evil, and I know of no way of getting rid of them. Some conductors give them a lift, even letting them ride in the caboose if a man is at all decent, but this is against the rules. I expect this partly accounts for the great distances that you hear of their traveling. But where you have a long train it is impossible always to keep them off, and when they are on, and the train is in motion, you don't suppose that a brakeman is going to run the length of seventy-five coal cars to have a tussle with one of those fellows, do you? A brakeman's life is worth a trifle, even if a tramp's isn't."

SLIPS OUT OF IRONS

HUGH CRAIG, who rivals Houdini himself in the art of shaking off handcuffs and getting free of chains, has his startling ability in that direction to thank for the fact that he is at large instead of in New Jersey State Prison, where the law says he belongs.

Police of New York and New Jersey are searching for him.

Craig recently made his dash for liberty from the county court-house in Newark about 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

An hour before he had been sentenced to serve from fifteen to thirty years in prison for burglary. He was being led out to the prison van for the trip to the State prison, and was handcuffed and chained to three other prisoners.

How he slipped the handcuffs the guards do not pretend to know, even to-day. With a twist of the wrist he was free. With a wriggle and a hop he had shaken the chains, pushed an astonished guard aside, bowled over a couple of harmless old gentlemen he encountered in the court-house door and raced into the throng of homegoers on Market street.

The pursuing guards and police were unable to use their revolvers in the crowd and Craig, 40 years old as he is, showed them a burst of speed that not many of them could equal.

Craig was arrested last August in his rooms in a fashionable apartment house in Elmwood, N. J. His wife and small daughter were astounded when he was charged with a dozen or more robberies.

In his home, however, a kit of model burglar's tools was found, and that decided Judge Stickel on a severe sentence.

The Mystery Man

(A SERIAL STORY)

By JOE BURKE

PART ONE

MOST deeds of violence are reported to the police by ordinary citizens who chance to discover these tragic occurrences. The latest instance to startle the city was that of Patrolman No. 10562.

One night a man rushed into the office of police headquarters with the startling news that the body of a uniformed policeman was lying dead in an alley back of Hanson & Company's store, dealers in diamonds and rare stones. The policeman had a bullet-hole in his forehead.

The tragic newsbearer was Nick Foster, a belated workman, known to the police as respectable, and whose integrity was above questioning.

It was one of those starless, black nights, and the crime occurred within the "dead line."

The Hanson company was inside that visionary boundary, and many yeggs who had been tempted to crack a safe over that dead line were now sojourning where grim steel bars cast forlorn shadows within a grim gray prison.

While Foster talked with hands, shoulders and excited voice, Chief Lorden sat erect behind his desk, a lean, soldierly man with a face as hard as a saber blade. He snapped out incisive questions, drew deductions, and pressed a button on the side of his desk that summoned Detective Riley.

The echo of the bell had hardly died out when into the room strode Riley in the prime of his splendid youth. Clean of limb, there was no superfluous ounce on his trim, perfectly molded body. Riley touched the rim of his hat with his forefinger and stood silently at attention.

"I fear the 'Toad' has added another policeman to his list," said the chief, his eyes as hard as chilled steel. "Plugged through the head, stretched out back of Hanson's place. Guess it must be Fred Guilden, who the mayor broke. That's his beat. This man Foster will go with you and tell you all he knows on the way."

The full gray eyes of the detective narrowed. Before Fred Guilden was "broke" for what his honor termed as a violation of Rule XX he had been Riley's partner. Together they had solved many a knotty problem and landed the perpetrators behind the bars.

"You're not sure it's Fred, though," Riley asked.

"No, but Foster said it was a uniformed policeman, and unless Guilden's on the last half in the morning it must be him. Foster knows him; ain't that what you said?" the chief snapped out at the messenger. "Tell Detective Riley the story, Foster."

The night-worker burst forth into another jumble of incoherent vocabulary. But by damming the jargon flow the two officers fished out the story.

It had been while he was on his way home that he heard the sharp command "Halt!" followed by two revolver shots. The sounds came from within the narrow alley, back of the Hanson place, used mostly for shipping and receiving merchandise. Just as he got abreast of the alley he was nearly bowled over by a squatty form, who catapulted from its obscured mouth, hurling a snarling curse at him, and bounded away in the darkness. He then ventured into the alley and found the murdered man.

The chief dismissed Foster and gave Detective Riley summary, crisp instructions.

"Take Sands with you, and go and look the ground over. I'll ring up Guilden's station and notify the desk sergeant. When

you've cared for his body, see if there's been a break, or an attempt at one, in Hanson's place. You've got to find that bloody fiend, Riley. I'm going to take you off the Vance case and set you after the 'Toad.'"

That ended it. Detective Riley was a trained sleuth and knew better than to question, dictate or protest against his transfer. And Fred Guilden was his friend, so a personal vengeance spurred him on.

A word or two about the "Toad." He was dubbed that moniker by the police. During the past month this crook had been guilty of shooting four members of the uniformed force and one plain-clothesman. Guilden was included. Thousands of dollars in currency, jewelry and negotiable bonds had been stolen by the queer night marauder, whose uncanny method of bouncing, rolling, and hopping like a mammoth toad and nearly convinced the superstitious members of the force that he wasn't human. Shots failed to stop him, but he never missed when he returned the fire.

Within ten minutes Detective Riley was at the scene of the shooting. It was late fall, and a heavy frost glistened white on the ground where the body lay. Shoeprints marred the crystal surface about the still form of his friend, dumb evidence that the pair were locked in deadly embrace before the fatal shot was fired. Near the outstretched rigid hand was his service revolver. One empty shell in its barrel told who fired one of the shots Foster heard.

Riley gazed long and steadily into the glassy eyes of his murdered friend. His strong jaw tightened. They would never again meet and swap yarns of close "shaves" and important captures. The pleasing voice was stilled forever, and the only roll-call this valiant watch-dog of the law would now answer was the one that would be read by the Great Redeemer.

The detective choked down his rising emotion and turned his thoughts to the problem confronting him. The footprints showed that Guilden must have come upon the assassin either in the act of entering or leaving the Hanson place—he would verify that when the reserves arrived—and probably called on him to halt. They were close enough to one another for the policeman to jump on the prowler, who, when squirming out of the clinch, fired the fatal shot. Although his wound was mortal, Guilden very likely discharged his gun at the fugitive with a last dying effort.

When the police from the slain officer's precinct arrived they took charge of the body until the coroner viewed it. Riley went about looking for clues. A policeman, who had been ordered by the sergeant in command of the squad, reported his findings a few minutes later. Hanson company's store had not been entered, thus making plain the fact that the dead policeman came upon the Toad, if it were him, before he began his plundering work.

Carefully the detective, bending low, swept the frost-mantled macadam with his flashlight. His trained eyes searched everywhere. At the foot of a raised platform, which is commonly used as a loading and discharging structure, the gleam from his flashlight cast its ray on a dark object bristling with shiny nails. It was an outer "lift" of a shoe-heel. It looked possible that the murderer was upon the platform when surprised by Guilden, and in leaping to the ground tore off the leather. Maybe. Detectives are not unlike a drowning person. They grasp at everything, even though it be ever so unimportant in appearance. Riley pocketed his find. That nail-studded piece of leather might some day send the murderer to the electric chair.

Finally concluding that he could do no more on the case that night, the detective went to his home. He slept badly and dreamed of a hideous, malformed, snarling "thing" flitting about his bed, mocking, taunting and sneering defiance at him. Then the misshapened figure seemed to grow, to expand and take on the form and face of Guilden.

He awoke shivering, and when fully awake became thoughtful. Sleep eluded him the rest of the night. From a nightmared night he arose to a decided dawn. After a refreshing bath and a light breakfast he set forth again. Within fifteen minutes he was in conference with his chief.

On the street again his watchful eye was

everywhere. Into the forbidding recesses of the underworld he probed, questioned, threatened and bullied, but without avail. The so-named "Toad" was as much of a mystery to some of the oldest habitués as he was to the police.

Then the detective's feet brought him to the Back Bay section. It was past noon now, and being young and healthy, his stomach was growing unruly. Riley had formed no theories, nor did he yet possess any tangible clue. He was groping in the dark by daylight and looking forward to the night to give him light.

Guided by physical instinct, Detective Riley entered a lunch-room on Newbury Road and lowered himself into a stool before the counter. The place at the time was void of patrons, and the seat which the young sleuth selected was the nearest one to the front window, thus commanding a clear view of the street.

Riley toyed with the knife and fork while waiting for his order and gazed absently without. In their wandering his eyes rested on a three-storied building directly across the street from where he was sitting, which in the past decade had been the palatial abode of a millionaire. Its present occupants were of divers professions, as the building had been renovated to suit various trades.

As he looked and read the different names and their business the front door opened, and a girl stood framed in the doorway. She looked not unlike any other young girl, nor would the headquarters man have given her a second thought, had it not been for the furtive glances which she was casting up and down the avenue.

The waitress was now placing his order before him, and noting his inattention to the fact, followed his peering glance and smiled.

"That dame," she chirped, rolling her cud of gum over in her mouth and tucking away a fugitive wisp of hair at the back of her neck, "is some timid creature, I'll say, mister. She does that up-and-down-th'-street stunt every time she comes out. She is on her way here now. Sh-s-s-s!" she warned.

Detective Riley was gorging himself with a plentiful serving of ham and eggs when the girl entered the lunch-room. From the tail of his eye he noted that she was rather pretty. She was surely a frail-looking person, but quoting the waitress' passage, "She's some timid creature," the detective thought likewise.

Without giving as much as a passing glance at Riley, she fluttered to the other end of the room, smiled a greeting to the waitress, and ordered three dinners. Her eyes were everywhere as she waited for the order—from the bill of fare to the floor, from there to the kitchen, and in fact everywhere in the room except on the figure appeasing his appetite.

At last the dinners were brought out on a tray. She paid for them and hurried out. Riley watched her departing form until she closed the door of the house across the avenue behind her. He then turned to the waitress.

"Who is she, and how long has she been living there?" he asked her, for the girl's suspicious actions aroused his interest.

The waitress cocked her head rooster-like and lowered an eyelid knowingly.

"Don't know who she is, mister, but I do know that it's a queer bunch she lives with. They've been over there about a month or five weeks, her and a big guy who calls himself Professor. They have three rooms on the top floor, and sometimes in the evening they quarrel like tomcats."

"You mean that she and the Professor quarrel?" put in the detective hastily. He was now glowing with interest.

"No," she replied, serving a piece of pie which he had ordered. "That's the funny part about it. She's been coming over here for their meals ever since they took those rooms, and she lets it drop that there's only her and th' big guy. She's his secretary, she says. And listen, mister; I been trying to place you ever since you blew in, and now I've hit it. You're a cop. There's something mighty strange going on over there, Mr. Riley, and I'm gonna wise you up to some of their doings."

The detective smiled as he paid for his meal, and gave her a liberal tip.

"Righto, little girl, shoot! Pass the information."

"Well, you see, it's like this, Mr. Riley," she began. "We close at nine. I usually sit near the window and pipe the dames and their new styles. No Johns for me, Mr. Riley," she dimpled. "I've got a steady."

The detective smiled and nodded encouragingly.

"Well, anyway, a few nights after they moved in I hears a rumpus in the house, and I goes out to the door and looks up at their window," the waitress went on. "The place was all lit up and the shades were drawn down to the bottom. There was some loud talk and cursing, and it was men's voices, too. As I watched a shade was run up, and the dame who you saw in here opened the window and looks out, when another figure that looked like a big dog standing on its hind legs grabs her and yanks her into the room. Then the lights went out."

Detective Riley sprang to his feet. He caught the waitress' arm in a grip that made her cry out with pain.

"Pardon me," he apologized, relaxing his hold, "but what do you mean by saying that a thing looking like a dog pulled her away from the window? Was it a dog or were you only seeing things?"

"Nix on the cave man stuff, Mr. Riley," she said reproachfully. "They have no dog, and it wasn't a dog, for a few nights afterward I seen it coming down the fire-escape when I was going home. It nearly scared me stiff. It was a deformed man."

Riley waited to hear no more. Mumbling thanks to the girl, he left the lunch-room and hurried across the street. In the vestibule he noted a bell over which the word "Janitor" was painted. That he rung, and in a few minutes a burly figure flung open the door and gruffly asked the detective's business. His churlishness soon melted into servility when Riley threw back his coat, thus disclosing his identity.

The information gleaned from the apartment-house janitor was no different from the story already told by the waitress. He said the professor was a dramatic teacher and that the so-termed quarrels were only exercises used in the course of his instructions. The janitor also apprised the detective that he had never seen a man looking like a dog in the flat, and did not remember ever seeing a third person there, nor a pupil. Professor Ulburn, he called himself, while the girl's name was Effie Scott. He seemed plentifully supplied with money, and was generous to the extent of lavishness with his tips.

Riley was thoughtful when he took his leave after the interview with the janitor. Foremost in his mind was the "dog-like thing" at the window the girl mentioned. It was not the professor, for, according to description, he was a person of massive size.

Riley looked at his watch, and noted that the time was nearly four o'clock. A light snow had been falling since noon, which had now turned into a biting, driving sleet. He buttoned his coat as he stood ruminating over the crowded happenings of the past month and the toad-like thing who played the important part in them. The detective, guided by a hunch, determined to meet the Professor face to face. If he was a fraud sailing under false colors to hoodwink the police, there would be a possible chance that he would recognize the young sleuth. And disguises were not in Riley's line.

For the second time that day the headquarters man headed for the front entrance of the building which was foremost in his thoughts. As he came abreast of the place there came a loud crash, followed by a missile landing at his feet amidst a shower of broken window glass.

With the agility of a panther Riley darted out to the middle of the street. Darkness had fallen. Glancing up at the building from whence the fusillade of glass had rained down on him, he discovered that it came from a window on the third floor. That was where Professor Ulburn's apartment was! As he watched the half-drawn shade being lashed by the howling wind which tore through the shattered window-pane, a cry pealed out. It was not a woman's cry nor like the cry of anything human. Then the silhouette of a female figure appeared on the shade, her hair flying

loosely and arms gesturing wildly; then the light went out.

"I'm going to find out what's going on up there," gritted the detective, hurrying towards the doorway. Then he stopped. His shoe struck the missile, which lay on the sidewalk amidst a glistening mess of glass. He had entirely forgotten it. Once in his hand he examined it closely. He knew it was a shoe by the feeling when he picked it up. It was a man's shoe, and of a well-known make, black and very little worn. Then Riley stared harder. The outer "lift" of the heel was missing. Evidently it had not been off long, as the leather was not much soiled or worn.

Riley's eyes narrowed to mere slits as he fitted to the heel the "lift" which he had found on the scene of the murder of his former partner. The fit was perfect, every nail setting into place. The headquarters man could hardly suppress a shout of joy. A trained sleuth, he knew better than to place too much credence on his new find.

Riley started towards the door, stuffing the shoe into his pocket. But again he was brought up standing, this time by a vise-like grip on his arm, which whirled him around. He looked into the stern face of a uniformed policeman.

"Where do you think you're going?" he asked sharply, his hold never relaxing. "And what's all the glass breaking around here?"

Detective Riley smiled as he appraised the young policeman. He, too, was a well-set-up chap in the early thirties, and wore his blue and brass with grace and ease.

"I'm going upstairs to the top floor," smiled Riley, "when you let go my arm. It's about the glass breaking that I'm going to inquire about. But since you're on the job, officer, I think I'll ask you to be the investigator, and I'll do the looking on."

"The devil you will," the bluecoat blurted out, then stopped. "Oh, that's different," he grinned, releasing the detective's arm as Riley flashed his badge.

Riley made himself known to the policeman. Then they entered the building.

On the third floor the two officers halted before a door on which was tacked a placard inscribed:

PROFESSOR ULBURN
Teacher
Dramatic Art and Elocution

Riley pressed the bell and stepped behind the policeman. After several minutes, in which he was obliged to ring again, the door was opened gingerly and the white face of Effie Scott peered through the aperture.

"What's the trouble up here?" demanded Dale in an arrogant manner. "Who's the boss of this flat?"

The girl was white to the lips. She even swayed as she drew open the door to admit them.

"No—trouble—officer," she stuttered. "Professor Ulburn rents this apartment. Would you care to see him?"

"You bet I would, and I'm going to. Come on, Mr.—eh—Brown."

They were ushered into a cozy, well-furnished sitting-room at the front of the house in which a cheerful fire of logs crackled and sputtered in the fireplace. Riley's trained eye swept the whole place with a glance, noting every object and taking in every minor detail of the furnishings. The broken window, which was now covered over with a square piece of cardboard, was the only thing that marred the homey aspect. His mute inspection was interrupted by the sound of footsteps, and the next instant a door opened at the rear of the room, and the Professor strode in.

The figure that confronted the officers was of massive size. He was a giant. It would have been hard to determine his age as he smiled a greeting through a heavy black beard. His eyes were concealed by heavy lids, like curtained windows. And there was little expression on his features. The face was a mask. The big nose, the square, brutal jaw, and the wide forehead were white as with a queer sort of pallor. The man standing before Detective Riley and Patrolman Dale looked like either a hardened criminal or a genius who was run down at the heels.

"My secretary said that you wish to see

me in regard to the little mishap which occurred a few minutes ago," he began, addressing his conversation to Dale. "That's easily explained, officer. But what is this gentleman doing here?" he added, inclining his large head in the direction of the detective. "Headquarters man—eh?"

"Oh, no," corrected Dale. "This gentleman was passing and got showered with glass. He got kinda sore and hunted me up. Now what's wrong?"

Ulburn stroked his beard reflectively and lowered his ponderous body into a chair. Resting an arm on the table, he nervously drew his fingers back and forth on the polished surface. All the while he seemed deep in thought, although he cast frequent glances at Detective Riley.

"It happened this way, officer," he explained at last, hastened by the feigned impatience of the policeman, who frowned as he consulted his watch. "Miss Scott, my secretary and also my ward, is being fitted for a dramatic career. In the course of my instructions to-night I stumbled over a rug on the floor and fell against the window. My ward screamed, but fortunately I received no injury. That's what happened, gentleman, so I trust you'll excuse me from further explanations, as I'm somewhat upset. Miss Scott will verify all I've told you if it's necessary."

He arose slowly to his feet and walked toward the front door of the apartment.

"By the way, Professor," asked Dale quietly, following him to the door, "didn't a shoe fall out of your window? I found one in the street, and Mr. Brown thinks it came down with the glass."

Ulburn turned slowly and faced the policeman. If the question surprised him he showed no external indications of it. In fact, he barely looked at the shoe which the officer was holding towards him.

"Such a thing is possible, officer," he said with a feeble attempt of hauteur. "There was a shoe lying on the window-sill which I was considering sending to a repair shop. In the excitement of the moment I was unaware of the fact, but it is possible that I pushed it out in the course of my fall."

"Then *this* is your shoe?" asked the policeman, spurred on by a nudge from the detective. Dale was holding the leather foot covering, sole up, the marred heel in full view.

"Yes," said the Professor. His reply carried a tinge of exasperation. "Please throw it on the floor, and again I'm obliged to——"

"Oh, very well, Professor," interjected Dale as he felt another prod in his side. "Sorry to bother you, but it's our business to investigate such occurrences. Come on, Mr. Brown."

Again on the street and out of focus of any peering eyes from the windows of the apartment they had just left, the two officers shook hands.

"He's a phony, Dale," said Detective Riley, "and a liar, too. When you make your report tell Sergeant Eggleston that I'm camping in this locality for an indefinite period, and not to go sending out the reserves if some timid householder should telephone my description to the station and say there is a bold, bad burglar hanging around. Here comes your relief now, and as Collins is an old friend of mine I'll wise him up. And, Dale," he finished, laying his hand on the stalwart policeman's shoulder, "I won't forget to say a word or two about the way you followed my instructions to-night when I see Eggleston."

Patrolman Collins, on night duty, first half the night in question, greeted the detective with a cheery salutation and a bone-crushing handshake.

"It's glad I am to see you, Mr. Riley," he said in a rich Celtic voice.

"Thanks," smiled the headquarters man. "Who's this fellow Dale who you just relieved?"

"Dale?" Collins turned and looked after the young policeman walking down the street. "That's a mighty fine lad, Mr. Riley, and some day he's gonna make his mark in the department. He's a new man and my night partner. Phillips has been transferred, so Dale's been doing the day shift. He'll be back on night duty soon, as the captain's gonna put an older man on the day shift."

(*Continued in our next number.*)

A Strange Escape

A SECTION of iron bar was cut from the cell door of Dave Paddock by that redoubtable knight of the dark lantern and "jimmy" on the occasion of his sensational escape from Joliet some time ago. For over two years Paddock had schemed and worked to effect his purpose. He was sent up from Rock Island on an eight-year term, and was placed at work in one of the shoe shops, where during every minute of the working hours in the shop he was constantly under the watchful eye of his keeper. There was not the least chance to plan an escape from the shop. But, not daunted at this, he determined to find some means of getting out of his cell at night. To fully appreciate the difficulty of cutting out of a cell it must be remembered that three times every hour during the night, at irregular intervals, a guard wearing padded slippers—called "sneak shoes" by the convicts—makes his rounds, peering into each cell to make sure that all are secure and in bed. Paddock first appropriated a couple of thin-bladed shoe knives from his shop, and, concealing them from the guard, took them to his cell, where, by using one as a file, he converted the other into a fine steel saw. Then by slow degrees he collected a large amount of shoe thread from the same shop, with which he braided the rope. All this required months of stealthful work, but in the course of time he had a slender, strong rope, fully fifty feet in length. This he kept carefully hidden in the mattress of his bed. Next he began sawing the bars on his door a little at a time. Night after night he watched for the passing of the guard, and as soon as that official was beyond hearing distance he would cut a little and then fill up the space with black wax, which he had also obtained from the shoe shop, so that the prying eyes of the guard could not discover by daylight that the door had been tampered with. When the bar had been cut through he carefully wedged it back into place with small iron staples and bits of lead.

He could now get outside of his cell, but the hardest work was yet to be done. His cell was located high up on the third tier, some sixty feet away from the tower door through which he hoped to make his way. Watching his chance, when the night guard was on the opposite side of the block of cells, he removed the bar from his door, crawled through the opening, and with all the agility of a cat climbed down the railing from tier to tier, ran across the corridor to the tower door, and, with a piece of shoemaker's wax, took an impression of the lock, regaining his cell before the guard appeared on that side of the cell-house.

By careful working he made a key out of lead pipe that a plumber had dropped near his work-bench in the shop. Several trips from his cell to the tower were made during the next few weeks before his key would fit, and then it took him some time to get together enough material to make a "dummy" to put in his bed to prevent his absence being discovered before he could get beyond reach. On the very day that he intended to make his escape, while returning from the shop to his cell, he slipped upon an icy stairway and badly sprained his ankle. This almost discouraged him. His months of anxious toil had come to naught. His scheme would surely be discovered. After three weeks in the prison hospital he was sent back to work, and when he reached his cell that evening was overjoyed to find his rope, key and "dummy" were still safely concealed in the mattress and everything as he had left it.

Another week elapsed before his ankle would permit his making the attempt. The night came, however, and along about midnight he was safe inside the tower. A single iron bar still stood between him and freedom, and it would take long hours of hard work to cut through it. Just as day-

light began to break the bar gave way. The rope now came into good use, and with its aid he slipped down upon the prison lawn and hurried away to the woods that line the bluffs east of the prison. Here he found a thicket of underbrush, where he lay hid all that day, and when darkness came again he got away.

His absence was not discovered from prison until the guard went to unlock his cell in the morning. This was without doubt the cleverest escape that had taken place at Joliet, and stamped Paddock as a genius.

Extraordinary efforts were made for his recapture. Large rewards were offered, and his description was sent broadcast. A year later it was discovered that Paddock had a lady friend in Chicago. A watch was set on her house for several weeks, and sure enough one night Paddock put in an appearance. Captain Simon O'Donnell, of the police department, had the place surrounded and the daring convict was again in the toils. He was taken back to his old quarters at the prison, where he finally completed his sentence, not, however, until he had tried several other schemes for escape, but he was too closely watched to ever again succeed.

AN EXCITING BURGLAR CHASE

FIFTH avenue, from the Plaza to Sixty-fifth street, New York, was awakened the other morning by the roar of two powerful touring cars loaded with fur bandits rushing madly north and east to escape three guards of the Holmes Electric Protective Company pursuing with all the noise and fury of one Ford racer, three automatic pistols and three police whistles. The chase followed a point-blank pistol fight in which the guards had routed the two carloads of bandits, whose efforts to force the door of Charvet & Co.'s fur shop at 18 West Fifty-seventh street had set off a burglar alarm and warned the Holmes men.

About 4:30 o'clock in the morning the Holmes offices recorded an automatic alarm from the fur shop, and three guards—James Kelly, A. E. Armstrong and Thomas B. Ruhl—jumped into their car and headed for the scene of action. As they turned into Fifty-seventh street from Fifth avenue they saw two big Cadillac touring cars, one an olive drab and the other black, standing in front of the fur shop, one at the curb and the other near the center of the street, and both headed toward Fifth avenue. As the Holmes car neared the other two, four men ran from the doorway of the fur shop and jumped into the outside car.

The Holmes men saw that they were outnumbered, but threw their car diagonally across the opening between the other two. They had barely come to a stop when a man on the front seat of the car which the four presumable burglars had just entered opened fire on Ruhl at a distance of less than ten feet. Four shots came in rapid succession as first one and then the other of the two big cars backed away from the entangling Ford and sped up Fifty-seventh street to Fifth avenue.

The three guards turned in one swift circle and followed the black car up Fifth avenue, firing as they followed at the body and tires. For nine blocks they continued their pursuit, firing and blowing their police whistles, but the superior power of the burglars' car enabled them to escape. The Holmes men say they put at least three shots through the back of the others' tonneau. The gray Cadillac meantime had escaped down Fifty-seventh street.

The Holmes men after the failure of their chase notified the police of the Twenty-sixth Precinct and Detective Ferguson with nine others answered the alarm. The proprietor of the fur shop, M. Charvet, also appeared shortly afterward and told the police that it was the second attempt on the place within a year. The first was attempted by means of cutting through the brick wall from the hallway to the store, but failed by reason of the electric system giving an alarm.

To Hear the Spirits

THE sublime faith of believers in spiritism frequently finds expression in very pronounced views on this mysterious subject. One of its strongest disciples is the Rev. G. Vale Owen, who recently arrived here from England aboard the Cunard liner *Antonia*. He claims to have been in direct communication with spirits of the dead and to have gleaned from them a great many facts hitherto unknown. The clergyman's beliefs and theories are extremely interesting, as he contends that the souls of those who pass over the borderland endure many of their earthly proclivities.

Some realize what hunger is in the misty beyond, others are purified in hell, and the clergyman is always conscious when they control his mind. If Doctor Owen can produce the results he claims he will have achieved greater fame than Hyslop, Flammarion and a number of other noted psychics. That he can talk with and hear the spirits does not seem at all marvelous to him. In fact, he is quite sure that spirit communication is a very simple matter.

Such communication, he asserts, is theoretically possible for every one, although there are certain practical limitations.

No detailed description of the spirit world is possible, inasmuch as the finite mind of man is not capable of appreciating its infinite realities. It bears the same relation to the physical world as a four-dimensional universe bears to a three-dimensional one, he asserts.

The revelations made to the doctor by his friends and relatives in the spirit world have brought him considerable prominence in England, where he won to his support such figures as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and the late Viscount Northcliffe. His present visit to the United States was prompted by Doyle, who has termed him an "inspired or God-guided man." Doctor Owen recently resigned his position as vicar of Orford in order to be able to devote more time to the study of spiritualism.

While in this country he will lecture on psychic science and human survival, giving the substance of what are known in England as the Vale Owen scripts—the automatic or inspirational writings transmitted to him by his mother and other spirits. Where Conan Doyle has come in touch with the spirit world through mediums, Doctor Owen professes to have been in direct contact.

"It was through my wife that I first established communication with the spirit world," he said. "The spirits who guided her hand asked for me. At first I refused, but the requests were so persistent that I felt I must play the game and be a sportsman. It was not necessary for me to go into a trance; they use my whole personality and I am always conscious of what I am writing.

"Just as one can hum a tune mentally without making a sound, so do I hear these messages. Mental clairvoyance is perhaps the best way to describe it. Usually I can hear two or three words ahead of the word I am writing. It is also possible to ask questions, but I have found that this interferes with the plans of the spirits. To ask questions along practical materialistic lines is to come to a lower plane, and I have always avoided any intrusion of earthly affairs."

Asked for some hint as to what the world beyond death might consist of, as revealed in the messages he has received, Doctor Owen replied:

"It is impossible to put in the language of earth any correct and adequate description of the heavenly spheres. To do so is tantamount to the attempt to describe a four-dimensional world in three-dimensional language. Feeling this difficulty, I was questioning my mother in regard to the general characteristics of the spirit spheres and

more especially of those into which we should first pass after leaving earth life, and she put it into one short emphatic phrase, 'Earth made perfect.'"

In passing beyond death man leaves behind his physical body and takes with him his spiritual body or soul. In regard to the material conditions of the spirit world Doctor Owen asserted that earthly minded persons carried with them their earthly mindedness and for a time required food and other material comforts.

"They think their spiritual bodies are the same as material bodies," he said, "and need food. Gradually they find that they do not need it."

"What sort of food?" he was asked. He hesitated a moment and then answered his question:

"We do not know. They receive something which satisfies their desires, and that is all we learn.

"Children," he continued, "do not come to immediate maturity, but grow gradually into it. For such of us as have sinned against the spiritual and material laws, there is a hell through which we must pass before we reach heaven. It is a remedial and not a punitive period. But I do not like to speak of that—we have enough darkness on earth without venturing into the darkness beyond."

WINNERS of the CASH PRIZE CONTEST

OUR Cash Prize Contest, begun in No. 121, ended in No. 126. There were great quantities of coupons mailed to us, most of them arriving just as the contest was closing. The four contestants who sent the largest number have won the prizes. We not only congratulate the lucky winners, but also thank the losers for the keen interest they took in the competition. Checks will go forward to the lucky four at once.

HERE ARE THE PRIZE WINNERS

FIRST PRIZE, $25.00

Jack Butensky, 923 Wilkins St., Detroit, Mich.....97 Coupons

SECOND PRIZE, $15.00

Arthur Berding, 2209½ Dodier St., St. Louis, Mo.....68 Coupons

THIRD PRIZE, $10.00

Nathan Gross, 162 Lewis St., New York City.....51 Coupons

FOURTH PRIZE, $5.00

Sol Waldman, 141 Harrison Ave., Brooklyn, N. Y.....36 Coupons

Prisons

AN element of the weird and terrible was shown in the World's Fair.

Around its wall stood rows of cells of every size and variety of arrangement. Many of them were reproductions of those which have held prisoners, persons whose names are known to every reader of history. The cells of the Mamertine prison, where St. Paul was confined; the dismal dungeons of the Inquisition, the living tombs of the Bastille, the Strange torture chambers of Oriental barbarism—all were reproduced with the greatest fidelity.

In each cell were life-size wax figures showing the type of man who once suffered therein. These figures were clothed in perfect accord with the prison garb of the country and the time—as the cap and mask of the Belgians, or the stripes which are worn by prisoners in this country. The reproduction was made exact even to the drinking cups and the plates in which food and water were offered to the prisoners.

There were large models of all the famous prisons showing the varying styles of architecture and the devices for defense against attack from without and security from insurrection within. Every variety of lock and bolt was shown, from the massive bars and chains of old days to the nice mechanical devices of the present time. The exact duplication of these places of detention gave the observer a chance to judge not only the degree of physical comfort possible under such conditions, but the effect likely to be produced upon the mind. The tortures of the Inquisition depended not only upon the persuasive power of physical suffering, but upon the terrifying surroundings and the sense of helplessness.

The milder punishment used in modern prisons were shown with perfect fidelity to the facts. The appliances of capital punishment—the rope, the axe and the electric chair were there for the contemplation of the visitor.

Framed in wax were some of the men notable in the history of prison work. The famous wardens of American and foreign prisons and the detectives who helped to fill the dungeons with society's enemies appeared in life-like form.

Byrnes, of New York, the Paris prefect of police, London's chief, and the high officials of Oriental lands were there in effigy to terrify the beholder who had guilt in his heart.

Among the more modern devices was a plan for a revolving prison, where the unfortunate captives are somewhat like squirrels in cages. The invention was intended to be humane, however, and aimed at nothing more disastrous to the prisoner than the certainty that he cannot escape. It also claimed to absolutely protect prison officers from assaults of convicts. The cells are formed in a circular prison, somewhat as if they were slices cut symmetrically from a cheese. The dividing walls and the floors are of iron. The outside wall is built around the whole affair. Within it the circular, cellular contrivance revolves slowly, the idea being that no convict can work for any length of time on any one part of the wall which divides him from liberty. The revolution goes on only at night, and is so slow as to cause no discomfort. There was a mechanism by which the jailer could turn the cells around when he wished to release or incarcerate a prisoner.

There was a very interesting collection of pictures furnished by a Japanese correspondent, but dealing with methods of punishment in Chinese prisons. Pleasant devices they were for securing human discomfort. They showed some methods of tying up the offenders which were original and remarkable.

A fearful array of old-time instruments of torture has been preserved for many years in Nuremburg. The original or a faithful reproduction was shown.

Mystery Magazine

The feature stories already published in this magazine are worth reading. The following are the titles of the novelettes contained in the numbers already printed.

1 "The Eel Man," by Robert Carlton Brown.
2 "Zitana of Maison Rouge," by F. W. Doughty.
3 "The Mysterious Web," by Armstrong Perry.
4 "Under the Hypnotic Spell," by Dr. H. Enton.
5 "The Silken Sheath," by Crittenden Marriott.
6 "A Fortune Teller's Secret," by Gladys Hall.
7 "The Mystic Emblem," by Marie Coolidge Rask.
8 "The Cards of Fate," by William Goode.
9 "Mr. Bachellor's Apartments," by W. H. Osborne.
10 "The Inner Wheel," by Octavius Roy Cohen.
11 "The Voice of the Valley," by Robt. C. Brown.
12 "The Sign of the Seven Sharks," by C. F. Oursler.
13 "Under a Mask," By Crittenden Marriott.
14 "Case 4,444," by Gladys Hall.
15 "After a Million," by Police Captain Howard.
16 "Shadowing the Blue Triangle," by C. F. Oursler.
17 "The Case of Captain Fortesque," by R. Ingalls.
18 "The Bird-Headed Sphinx," by Edith S. Tupper.
19 "The Double Mystery," by Dr. Harry Enton.
20 "The Magician Detective," by C. F. Oursler.
21 "King Cobra Mystery," by George Gilbert.
22 "The Haunted Corridors," by Wm. H. Osborne.
23 "No Man's Man," by Maxwell Smith.
24 "The Trevor Puzzle," by T. C. Harbaugh.
25 "The Trail of Roses," by Edmund Condon.
26 "The Hindoo Vanishing Clue," by Pauline Bouve.
27 "Who Was Guilty?" by Beulah Poynter.
28 "The Evil Eye," by Chas. F. Oursler.
29 "The Thirteenth Door," by Edith S. Tupper.
30 "The Game of Detective Carew," by L. Jerome.
31 "Law-maker and Law-breaker," by B. Poynter
32 "The Counterfeit Heiress," by Inspector Harrigan.
33 "Tracked to China," by Chief Roger O'Brien.
34 "After the German Spies," by May Halsey Miller.
35 "The Clue in the Box," by Alexander Douglas.
36 "Trained by a French Detective," by Rene Renaud.
37 "A Drop of Ink," by Lieut. Robt. W. Warden.
38 "The Ten Doctors," by Allan Arnold Fox.
39 "The Stain on Page 61," by Chas. T. Jordan.
40 "A Masked Mystery," by Police Sergeant Kelly.
41 "The Black Soul," by Beulah Poynter.
42 "The Sanctuary," by Wm. H. Osborne.
43 "The Mystery of the Seven Shadows," by Chas. F. Oursler.
44 "The Sign of the Dragon," by C. Martin Eddy, Jr.
45 "The Magic of Detective Woo Fang," by Frank F. Whitfield.
46 "The Decoy," by William Hamilton Osborne.
47 "The House With 30 Steps," by Ralph D. Porter.
48 "When the Clock Struck 13," by Dr. Harry Enton.
49 "A Piece of Blotting Paper," by Dorothy Weber.
50 "The $200,000 Mystery," by Ethel Rosemon.
51 "The Case of Dr. Brice," by Mary R. P. Hatch.
52 "The Phantom Motor," by Laura R. Montgomery.
53 "The Blackjack," by William H. Osborne.
54 "The Whispering Head," by Chas. F. Oursler.
55 "The Inspector's Strange Case," by B. Poynter.
56 "The Secret of the Sealed Book," by E. Rosemon.
57 "The Clue of Steel," by Willis Lathrop.
58 "Alias Louis Vardon," by Wm. H. Osborne.
59 "Mystery of the Old-Time Club," by C. Bingold.
60 "Caught With the Evidence," by Ethel Rosemon.
61 "A Little Gold Spider," by Cecil Burleigh.
62 "The Velvet Touch," by Julian Darrow.
63 "The Clue of the Red Lamp," by C. F. Oursler.
64 "The Scheme of Solomon Snare," by W. Osborne.
65 "Quicker Than the Eye," by Ralph Cummins.
66 "The Clue of the Dark Room," by H. Craigie.
67 "The Tongue of Osiris," by Marc Edmund Jones.
68 "Detective Wade's Big Case," by E. Rosemon.
69 "The Spirit Bell," by Charles Fulton Oursler.
70 "The House Behind the Wall," by Julian Darrow.
71 "The Admiral's Spoons," by Wm. H. Osborne.
72 "The Canine Clue," by Thomas J. Lally.
73 "The Psychic Enemy," by Arthur Wm. Anderson.
74 "The Wonder Girl," by Ralph Cummins.
75 "On the Wrong Trail," by Ethel Rosemon.
76 "The Spirit Witness," by Chas. F. Oursler.
77 "The Little White Room," by Edmund Jones.
78 "The Stolen Year," by Edmund Elliot.
79 "The Affair at Hollywood House," by W. Kofoed.
80 "A Keyless Mystery," by Hamilton Craigie.
81 "Professor Satan," by Charles Fulton Oursler.
82 "Who Killed McNally?" by Beulah Poynter.
83 "The Clue of the Whorl," by Katherine Stagg.
84 "The 'Czar' and the Ring," by Edmund Elliot.
85 "The Clue of Flame," by Jack Bechdolt.
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99 "The Cross," by W. S. Ingram.
100 "The Secret Service Mystery," by Hamilton Craigie and Elliot Balestier.
101 "A Crimson Price," by Elliott Lester.
102 "The Inspector's Strange Case," by G. Jacobs.
103 "A Museum Mystery," by Jack Bechdolt.
104 "The Little Red Book," by J. Alexander Young.
105 "A Man from Siam," by Chas. F. Oursler.
106 "The Clue of the Emerald Ring," by B. Poynter.
107 "Hell's Hinges," by Hamilton Craigie.
108 "The Wolf," by Katherine Stagg.
109 "The Brass Button," by Jack Bechdolt.
110 "A Whispering Mummy," by Chas. F. Oursler.
111 "Trapping the Jewel Smugglers," by B. Poynter.
112 "The Missing Evidence," by Harold F. Podhaski.
113 "A Clue by Radio," by Capt. Jack Static.
114 "The District Attorney's Secret," by C. Oursler.
115 "A Man From Headquarters," by H. Craigie.
116 "The Girl in the Case," by Carl Glick.
117 "A Scientific Detective," by D. G. McDonald.
118 "Number Nine Queer Street," by Jack Bechdolt.
119 "Trailed by a Private Detective," by Gottlieb Jacobs.
120 "The Mouse Trap," by Edith Sessions Tupper.
121 "A Radio Mystery," by Capt. Jack Static
122 "The Clawing Death," by Beulah Poynter.
123 "A Master of Millions," by Chas. Fulton Oursler.
124 "The Secret of Room 13," by Hamilton Craigie.
125 "Six Months to Live," by George Bronson-Howard.
126 "Seals of Wax," by Jack Bechdolt.
127 "When Crooks Conspire," by Harold F. Podhaski.
128 "The Mystery of the Blue Car," by H. Craigie.

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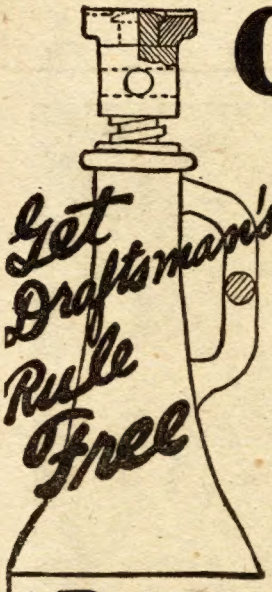

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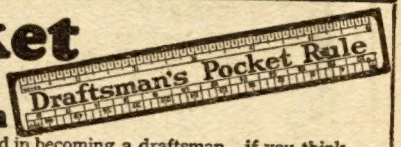

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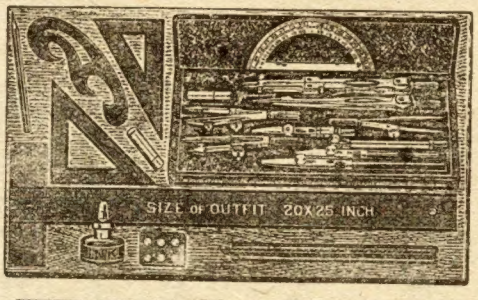

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